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# Saipan Tribune

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## OPINION METER

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## INSIDE



### Wildfire

A wildfire chewed its way through dense brush near L.A., forcing more than 1,000 people from their homes.

NATION...Page 14

### Train Collision

A pre-dawn collision Monday between two passenger trains in eastern China killed at least 43 people and injured 247.

ASIA...Page 15



### Bridal Show

The first Bridal Fair and Party Exhibit, held this weekend at the Hibiscus Hall, culminated with a Bridal Fashion Show.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

'Rice prices will continue to increase'

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

The leading importer of rice in the CNMI said the price of the staple would continue to increase until the end of the year because of international market forces.

See RICE on Page 4



By AGNES E. DONATO  
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REPORTER

A bank economic forecast has predicted steady economic growth for Guam and tough times ahead for the Northern Marianas.

AP



Robert Buxton, of North Andover, Mass., center, speaks with Sally Bowles, of Mashpee, Mass., foreground right, director of human resources at The Catania Hospitality Group during a job fair in Hyannis, Mass., Monday, April 14, 2008.

### US employers bracing for shortage of alien workers

HYANNIS, Mass. (AP)—Breakfast will not be served this summer at Cape Cod's Crown & Anchor. The Provincetown resort and entertainment complex usually hires 10 to 12 people from Jamaica and Eastern Europe each summer as cooks, housekeepers and maintenance workers. But new visa restrictions mean the guest workers it used last year aren't expected back. With fewer workers, the resort's management realized it wouldn't have the manpower to serve three meals a day.

See US on Page 4

Suspect in helmet attack on Tinian arrested. PAGE 2  
Ex-senator's son pleads guilty to sex abuse. PAGE 3

## FHB ECONOMIC FORECAST

# Steady growth for Guam but tough times for NMI

According to First Hawaiian Bank's 2008 Guam-CNMI Economic Forecast, the prospect for Guam is generally bright, thanks to the planned military buildup. However, the economic outlook for the Commonwealth is not as optimistic.

"Guam's economy continues

to fire on all cylinders in anticipation of its coming military buildup. Preparing for that buildup is an enormous task for the isolated island economy, and that causes some on Guam to question how realistic the targeted timeframe is. Just to the

See STEADY on Page 4



### Suspicious bag prompts partial CHC evacuation

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN  
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REPORTER

A black leather briefcase that sat on a bench in front of the Commonwealth Health Center's Gift Shop caused the evacuation of

a portion of the Commonwealth Health Center building yesterday afternoon.

It was later found that the bag contained hearing test equipment, accidentally left behind by

See SUSPICIOUS on Page 4

CNMI Explosive Response Team officer Jesse Dubrall takes a picture of the briefcase after it was brought outside the Commonwealth Health Center yesterday afternoon. Inset shows dozens of CHC medical staff and personnel waiting outside the hospital for 50 minutes while emergency services personnel secure the area.

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# Local

## Suspect in helmet attack on Tinian arrested



**Commonwealth Utilities Corporation**



### INVITATION FOR BIDS COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION CUC-IFB08-003

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, is soliciting sealed bids for the **REHABILITATION OF THE EXISTING SLOW SAND FILTERS PROJECT** in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Sealed bids shall be identified on outside of the envelope by Invitation for Bids No. CUC-IFB08-003. Bids in six sets (including original) will be accepted at the Procurement and Supply Office, CUC, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan until 2:00 P.M., on, May 23, 2008, at which time and place will be publicly opened and read aloud.

A bid guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury.

The bidder is required to submit with his proposal a copy of his CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval from the USEPA.

The Contractor will be required to submit payment and performance bonds from a U.S. Treasury listed company. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage. The contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws including the Davis Bacon Act.

**The project consists, in general, of the rehabilitation of the existing slow sand filters, related plumbing, installation of qualitative measurement devices such as Turbidity Meters, Residual Chlorine Meter, related small pumps, electrical controls, and a new control room to house the metering devices adjacent to the Saipan International Airport, Saipan CNMI.**

A non-refundable payment of \$300.00 is required for each set of Plans, Specifications, and Proposal Forms, available on or after April 25, 2008 at the Water Division Office, CUC, Saipan. A pre-bid conference for this project is scheduled at 10:00 A.M., on May 9, 2008, at the CUC Conference Room, Saipan. A project site visit is scheduled following the pre-bid meeting.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government.

All inquiries should be directed to **Manuel B. Sablan, Procurement & Supply Manager at telephone number (670) 235-7025 thru 7032 Ext. 111/134** or Larry Manacop Water Division Engineer at extension 155.

ANTHONY C. GUERRERO  
Executive Director

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Police arrested on Saturday the suspect who allegedly slammed a motorcycle helmet on a man's head outside a nightclub on Tinian.

Before defendant Luis P. Cruz left the scene on board a moped, he was allegedly seen spitting on the victim, who was already lying on the ground.

Witnesses and a surveillance camera that caught the attack on tape reportedly led to the identification of the 41-year-old Cruz.

The victim, Cui Jingzhu, was transported to Tinian Health Center, then to the Commonwealth Health Center for head injuries.

According to a Tinian detective, when he interviewed Jingzhu at CHC on Friday, he and a Korean/Chinese translator could not understand what the victim was saying. The detective said that the victim was talking to himself and at the same time doing odd sign languages.

Cruz was arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon and aggravated assault and battery. A \$25,000 cash bail was initially imposed for his temporary release.

At a hearing yesterday morning, Superior Court associate judge Juan T. Lizama kept the bail amount at \$25,000 cash.

Detective Anthony P. Borja stated in court documents that on April 13 at 12:56am, an unknown person called the Tinian Department of Public Safety to ask for police's help over at Huang Shun

U-Save Supermarket.

When two police officers arrived at the scene, they noticed a man, later identified as Jingzhu, lying on the ground next to a car.

The officers observed that the victim's eyes were closed and kept swaying his head from left to right. Jingzhu could not talk.

Two firefighters responded to the area and gave the victim medical attention. A witness later approached and told a police officer that he saw a local man struck the victim on the head with a motorcycle helmet.

Jingzhu was then transported to Tinian Health Center for further medical evaluation.

The witness told a police officer that prior to the attack, he and Jingzhu went to the U-Joy Nite Club where they each drank a bottle of beer.

The witness said that, as they walked outside the club between 12:30am to 12:45am, the victim had an argument with two local men.

The witness said he tried to pacify them. As the witness went to his bicycle, he then saw one man struck the victim with a helmet.

The suspect left on board a motorcycle. The witness did not notice where the other man went.

Police later reviewed the footage of a surveillance camera installed in a store at the area. The witness also identified Cruz as the suspect.

At yesterday's bail hearing, Lizama rejected defense attorney Joey San Nicolas' motion to temporarily release Cruz to a third party custodian on \$5,000 cash bail plus property bond.

San Nicolas had recommended

ed Cruz's sister, Tinian Department of Community and Cultural Affairs resident director Principia C. Monkeya, to serve as third party custodian.

Assistant attorney general Joseph Taijeron did not object to Cruz's release on a \$2,500 cash plus property bond worth \$22,500.

When Lizama expressed that he would not grant the motion, San Nicolas said they are willing to double the amount by paying a \$5,000 cash plus property bond.

Lizama, however, pointed out that to appoint Cruz's sister as third party custodian is not the best selection, considering that her husband, Melvin Monkeya, is a Tinian police officer.

Lizama also stated that he does not accept homestead land as property bond and that he does not understand why the government accepts homestead as property bond. The judge said that the case is very serious and that Cruz poses a danger to the community.

"He [Cruz] doesn't deserve to be released right away!" Lizama said.

Taijeron tried to intervene, but Lizama said the prosecutor doesn't need to say anything at that point. Taijeron insisted that he be allowed to respond, but the judge turned him down again. The prosecutor said he is compelled to respond and that what he only wants is for justice in this case.

"Be careful Mr. Taijeron. You are out of bounds! Be seated, right now! I will do my job. And you would do well your job!" Lizama said.

The judge told Taijeron that if he wants to be a defense counsel, he should sit on the other side of the table.

### 3 indicted for trafficking 'ice'

Three men were arrested and charged in federal court for trafficking methamphetamine hydrochloride or "ice" last December on Saipan.

Gregory Sablan Kalen, Lawrence Sablan Kalen, and Manuel Aldan Sablan were brought to the U.S. District Court for the NMI last Friday.

The three, who appeared with court-appointed lawyers, pleaded not guilty.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson set the jury trial for June 30, 2008 at 9am.

Munson granted assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley's motion for no bail at this time for the defendants. He remanded them back into the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

According to the indictment, Gregory Kalen, also known as G, Goro, and Gregory Sablan Kani; Lawrence Kalen; and Manuel A. Sablan, also known as Manny Sablan, conspired to distribute "ice" on Dec. 1 to 13, 2007. (Ferdie de la Torre)

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# PUC unable to get hold of CTC money

By AGNES E. DONATO  
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REPORTER

The Public Utilities Commission has been unable to touch any money left by its predecessor, the Commonwealth Telecommunications Commission.

Rep. Francisco Dela Cruz reported that the bank holding CTC's funds is requiring documents from PUC before transferring the money. One of the requirements is a copy of the minutes of the commission's organizational meeting, where Viola Alepuyo was named chairwoman.

The issue of CTC's funds came up while the House of Representatives was debating a bill that includes a provision granting \$80,000 seed money to PUC.

Dela Cruz expressed reservation about the appropriation, saying the money could be used for other purposes such as helping the schools.

It is not clear how much money was left by CTC, but Dela Cruz said it could be substantial.

"I was assured that the PUC members are working diligently to get the transcript of the meeting to the bank," he said.

From its inception in 2001 until its abolition in 2006, CTC collected franchise fee from Verizon and later, Pacific Telecom Inc.

The telecommunications firm paid a franchise fee equivalent to 0.5 percent of its annual gross revenue from 2001 through January 2005, when the fee was raised to 2.5 percent of the annual gross revenue. The increase brought the franchise fee from approximately \$80,000 to over \$400,000 a year.

In addition to the money left by CTC, PUC expects to start collecting regulatory fees from

local utility companies.

Under the PUC law, telecom-

munications and other utility firms are required to pay 0.75

percent of their annual gross revenue to the regulatory board.

## Ex-senator's son pleads guilty to sex abuse

A son of former senator Ramon Deleon Guerrero who was charged with sexually abusing a minor girl twice entered a guilty plea yesterday in the Superior Court.

Pasqual K. Deleon Guerrero, 22, pleaded guilty to one count of sexual abuse of a minor in the second degree.

Associate Judge Juan T. Lizama accepted Guerrero's plea and set the sentencing for Aug. 6, 2008 at 10am.

Lizama directed the Adult Probation Office to prepare a pre-sentence investigation report.

The Attorney General's Office in January 2007 charged Deleon

Guerrero with one count of sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree and one count of sexual abuse of a minor in the second degree.

The defendant and his lawyer, Viola Alepuyo, signed a plea agreement with the government represented by assistant attorney general Joseph Taijeron Jr.

Under the plea agreement, the defendant will be sentenced to 10 years, all suspended except for zero to five years in jail. The judge will determine the prison term in that zero to five years range after the submission of a pre-sentence report.

The agreement also recommends 10 years of probation,

a \$500 fine, and 250 hours of community service.

The factual basis of the agreement stated that on or between June 1, 2006 and Aug. 2, 2006, Deleon Guerrero, at that time 20 years old, engaged in sexual contact with a girl who was then 11 years old.

According to court papers, the Department of Public Safety started investigating the incident in January 2007 after receiving a call about the matter.

Apparently, the girl confessed after her parents confronted her about somebody seeing her and Deleon Guerrero watching a movie. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

## 'CUC privatization in back burner'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
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REPORTER

The plan to privatize the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s power operations has been put on the sideline as the administration and CUC focus on repairing the power engines in the power plants.

Acting Gov. Timothy Villagomez told *Saipan Tribune* that there is a company that is coming in to address the engine repairs at the power plants.

"So this is ongoing. That was more of a priority to me, I told the governor. Then down the line, once everything is in place,

once we get the efficiency of the engines back, then maybe we can look privatization [again]," Villagomez said.

To his understanding, privatization has always been an option for the Fitial administration and CUC.

He said there is no request for privatization since the last one has been cancelled.

"The only one that is out is for alternative energy. But privatization is always an option," Villagomez said.

He said right now they are more concerned with what's going on at the power plants. "I opted to work on the situation at

the power plants," he stressed.

An Office of Public Auditor's report issued in July 2007 on the CUC privatization bid ruled that CUC failed to conduct the procurement process fairly and transparently, and discouraged competition by charging exorbitant fees.

OPA cited, among other things, that one cannot view the actual request for proposals unless he or she has paid a total of \$76,000, submitted financial and other information, and been deemed to be prequalified by CUC.

OPA said the fees are unreasonable, and counter the concept of full and open competition.

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# Daycare providers still waiting for payment

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN  
rianne\_pangelinan@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The month of April is almost through, yet members of the CNMI Daycare Association are still waiting for their March payments as promised by the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

According to CNMI Daycare Association president Masina Leuta, DCCA was contacted "so many times" to inquire about their payments and was finally told that the checks had already been mailed out and they should expect them by April 24.

"It's already April 28. April is almost through and until now, we have not received them," Leuta said.

Earlier this month, daycares were forced to withhold services to recipients of the childcare certificates until they received their February payments owed them by the program.

According to Leuta, after much discussion with the childcare program's new lead agency, daycare providers started taking in children of the childcare program when they finally received their February checks.

## US

From Page 1

"We don't want to run overtime for employees just to produce breakfast," said assistant general manager Rick Reynolds. "That doesn't make financial sense."

Employers around the country who thrive on seasonal business are preparing to lose thousands of foreign workers they've hired in past summers to work in restaurants, hotels, landscaping and other industries. New visa controls are cutting the number of temporary foreign work-

ers eligible to return to the country, so employers are scouring job fairs for replacements, lobbying Congress for help and bracing for staff shortages they say will make business tough.

Tourism and hospitality officials envision various problems if the jobs go unfilled: Restaurants may have fewer tables and longer wait-times. Hotel check-in times could be delayed as fewer housekeepers hustle to clean rooms. Resorts may offer fewer meals to guests.

"They will function, they will survive, they will be open—they just won't thrive," warned Jane Nichols

He said rice-exporting countries are hoarding their crops amidst droughts in China and Australia and production declines in the United States and Japan.

"Thailand, China, India, Egypt, Vietnam and Cambodia have either imposed minimum export prices, export taxes, or export quotas and, as is the case in India, bans. As a result, demand has surged in countries that rely largely on rice imports, such as Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Iran," said Barja.

The skyrocketing price of rice and

now. When the program was under the PSS [Public School System] for 15 years, they never deducted so much and never required so much—why only now?" Leuta asked.

Acting Secretary Melvin Faisao said that DCCA conducted payment computation training for childcare center-based providers at the Office of Aging Conference Room last week. Twelve center-based providers attended the training.

Faisao said that the training course was on computing subsidy assistance. "Training even covers relevant factors that may contribute to lesser payment for the providers from the subsidy, such as holidays and when parents are not working or attending school as actual computation is implemented; and the required types of document that providers must have the parents officiate before submission, such as child weekly attendance sheets," he said.

Faisao said that relative childcare providers would also be accorded the same training in the coming days.

Leuta complained, however, that "so many things are being done differently now and so many requirements are being asked from us."

"We are all just really confused right

Bishop, a Cape Cod consultant who matches up foreign seasonal workers with businesses.

The shortage hit winter ski resorts from Colorado to Vermont and is expected to affect summer hot spots like Newport, R.I., and Cape Cod, where businesses count on foreign workers to meet the tourist demand. Many seasonal workers have held the same job for years, and employers say they value their returning workers' experience and count on them to fill the critical, if unheralded, jobs that high school and college students typically aren't interested in.

its shortage of supply has put Barja and MBI in a bit of pickle—and equally the entire Commonwealth.

The company is the leading importer of rice in the CNMI and sells class A Thai jasmine, otherwise known as Hom Mali rice. MBI's brands—Royal Thai and Royal Harvest—are the market leaders on Saipan.

"Unfortunately, what is happening around the globe is making the availability of Thai jasmine (Hom Mali) rice more scarce. Rice prices have doubled the past

cy services personnel secured the area.

"As it turned out, the audiologist forgot her briefcase that contained hearing test equipment," Villagomez said.

The briefcase, which belonged to CNMI audiologist Dr. Angie Mister, contained an audiometer, which is a machine used for evaluating hearing loss.

challenges in view of federalization, forced federal minimum wage hikes, and the decline of the garment and tourism industries.

"This report appropriately concludes that federal wage hikes—imposed without adequate economic studies or support—are harmful to our local economy and federal immigration may pose further complications and challenges for our struggling island economy. The U.S. Congress needs to see this independent, non-partisan report and carefully consider federal policy in the islands," Reyes said.

The spokesperson for the Fitial administration said the FHB reports seems to be "a fairly realistic assessment" of the CNMI's current economic

One measure that the CNMI

# 'Early withdrawals' impact on Fund damaging in short-term'

By AGNES E. DONATO  
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REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund has mixed feelings about the impact of a new law allowing more government employees to withdraw their pension contributions.

Under the law, employees with 15 years of government service can withdraw their contributions to the Retirement Fund. Previously, only employees with 10 years of service were able to do this.

Fund administrator Mark Aguon said the law is likely to benefit the pension program in the long term. The more people taking out their contributions, the fewer future retirees there will be. That means the pension agency will have less liability to fund.

But more withdrawals also mean the retirement program will have to dispense more money than it does normally. Given that no government contributions are going into the Fund, the short-term impact can be damaging to the pension plan.

As of March 2008, the Fund had \$440 million in assets. This year, the Fund is expected to liquidate \$45 million in assets to pay benefits and administrative costs. If drawdowns continue at this rate and the government continues to fail to remit any money to the Fund, the pension program will be bankrupt in fewer than 10 years.

Juan T. Guerrero, chairman of the Fund board of trustees, reported that last week, the board approved the release of about \$350,000 to 14 members withdrawing their contributions.

Aguon said that since the law was enacted last year, contribution withdrawals had averaged \$500,000 a month.

"In general, the law has helped the Fund. But the drawdowns are impacting our cash flow severely," he said.

The retirement contribution withdrawal law was enacted despite a governor's veto.

In disapproving the measure, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial warned of the legislation's potential damage to the financial solvency of the pension program. To remain solvent and continue serving the retirees, the Fund must maintain contributions for investment purposes.

In addition, the governor said the existing 10-year period for early withdrawal is enough and fair to members who are considering whether to withdraw their contribution.

The governor said approval of the 15-year period would decrease the Fund's investment capital and further risk its ability pay pension to retirees and their families.

The Fund also had strongly opposed the legislation. At the time, Aguon said the bill was not clear on whether the payout would include just the employee's contribution or the amount of the employee's accrued benefits.

Aguon added that the proposal might hurt the retirees themselves who rely on the Fund for social security. "If we allow them to divest themselves of this source of income, we are encouraging members to forfeit their only source of social security. This is especially true for those whose entire career have been with the CNMI government," he said.

## RICE

From Page 1

In an interview with Micronesian Brokers Inc. general manager Francisco Barja, he said the global rice shortage is forcing rice prices to soar to record highs.

"The international rice market is facing a difficult situation, with demand outstripping supply and this has led to substantial price increases."

He said rice-exporting countries are hoarding their crops amidst droughts in China and Australia and production declines in the United States and Japan.

"Thailand, China, India, Egypt, Vietnam and Cambodia have either imposed minimum export prices, export taxes, or export quotas and, as is the case in India, bans. As a result, demand has surged in countries that rely largely on rice imports, such as Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Iran," said Barja.

The skyrocketing price of rice and

few months. But I am more concerned about the supply than the price. If there is no supply...then Saipan will face a big problem since more than 90 percent of the population consumes rice. As of now, consumer and retailers alike are complaining about the increase in prices. But we could not do anything. We cannot dictate Thailand, Vietnam, or other rice-producing countries to give us better prices," said Barja.

Asked if the trend of higher rice prices will continue for the foreseeable

able future, Barja said, "I believe that increasing prices and declining supply will continue until the end of the year."

He added: "Every week, we negotiate with our suppliers in Thailand for better prices and get the supply open for Saipan. We are also looking at other types of grains that will be acceptable to the general population. MBI is not the only wholesaler of rice though; there are others who sell rice in the market. I believe they are also doing their best to maintain their supply for this market."

## SUSPICIOUS

From Page 1

a CHC audiologist.

According to Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez, the briefcase had been sitting unattended

for quite some time, prompting DPH deputy secretary for hospital administration Joe Santos to call the police to secure the area until it was determined what the bag contained.

Dozens of CHC medical staff and personnel waited outside the hospital for at least 50 minutes while emergen-

cy services personnel secured the area.

"As it turned out, the audiologist forgot her briefcase that contained hearing test equipment," Villagomez said.

The briefcase, which belonged to CNMI audiologist Dr. Angie Mister, contained an audiometer, which is a machine used for evaluating hearing loss.

A similar incident happened late January when a military duffel bag belonging to an outpatient was unintentionally left behind outside the entrance doors leading to the pharmacy located on the second floor of the CHC building.

This incident caused people in the emergency room, pharmacy, adjoining

offices and second floor parking lot to evacuate the area.

According to Department of Public Safety spokesperson Lei Ogumoro, investigation revealed that an outpatient had unintentionally left behind his duffel bag Monday night at the entrance of the building before leaving the hospital.

## STEADY

From Page 1

north, the CNMI economy struggles with hard times brought on by serious blows to its major industries," said FHB economic consultant Leroy Laney, a professor of economics and finance at Hawaii Pacific University.

Laney said the CNMI's bleak economic condition may not get any better soon. He noted that both of its main industries—garment manufacturing and tourism—had suffered blows, and the CNMI must find some new economic growth

engine to survive.

Tinian's fledgling casino industry offers a glimmer of hope, despite challenges stemming from the island's isolation and unreliable transportation. "Yet overall," Laney said, "the CNMI economy is now left with few economic straws to grasp."

Laney added that recent minimum wage hikes and the controversial immigration federalization bill contribute to the economic uncertainty in the Commonwealth.

The spokesperson for the Fitial administration said the FHB reports seems to be "a fairly realistic assessment" of the CNMI's current economic

challenges in view of federalization, forced federal minimum wage hikes, and the decline of the garment and tourism industries.

"This report appropriately concludes that federal wage hikes—imposed without adequate economic studies or support—are harmful to our local economy and federal immigration may pose further complications and challenges for our struggling island economy. The U.S. Congress needs to see this independent, non-partisan report and carefully consider federal policy in the islands," Reyes said.

One measure that the CNMI

could consider, according to Laney, is to review existing restriction on land tenure.

The CNMI Constitution limits permanent ownership of real property to persons of Northern Marianas descent. Those not qualified as NMDs can only lease public land for up to 40 years and private land for up to 55 years. There are initiatives underway to extend the leasehold interest for private land to 75 years.

Laney said the land tenure restriction introduces unique problems for residential buyers, outside investors, and lenders within the CNMI.

"Modifications of the land ten-

ure limits, or even outright appeal, would help. At times like the present in the CNMI economy, no possibility for enhancing growth should be ignored," he said.

As for Guam, Laney said, the expected huge increase in military presence on the island will have major repercussions for construction, housing supply, housing prices, and retail activity.

But Guam's boom has its downsides. The increase economic activity is expected to bring higher inflation, more congestion, greater pressure on outdated infrastructure, and potential social problems of various kinds, Laney said.

# 'Hafa adai spirit' greets inaugural Rota charter

By MARK RABAGO  
mark\_rabago@saipantribune.com  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The inaugural charter flight to Rota touched down a little later than scheduled at the southernmost island of the Commonwealth early Sunday morning.

According to Pacific Development, Inc., the Continental Airlines Boeing 737 aircraft arrived around 1am on April 27. PDI, along with mother company Kinki Nippon Tourist Co. Ltd., organized the charter.

"It was all smooth and a sight to see, children with 200 leis lining up so excited to greet the first passenger with a friendly smile with the warm hafa adai spirit. Though it was late Continental Airlines landed smoothly and the first person to step on Rota was Mr. Katsuji Yoshiike, followed by the remaining guests on board Continental," said PDI general manager Gordon Marciano.

He added that the 155 passengers of the inaugural flight in all spent about 45 minutes to disembark from their aircraft and through Customs, Immigration, and quarantine checkpoints.

"Guests were very excited at the professional care by the time they exited through the main arrival doors. People from Rota continued to greet them as the guests boarded their vehicles for their hotels," added Marciano.

The people of Rota that came to the airport to welcome the arrivals—disregarding their bedtimes—were led by Rota Mayor Joseph S. Inos and Sen. Felix Mendiola.

Also on hand were Commonwealth Ports Authority chair Rex Palacios, Marianas Visitors

Authority managing director Perry Tenorio, and MVA board member Edward Martita.

Marciano added that the Rota community anxiously waited at the apron for Continental Airlines to land on the runway.

"Cheers echoed as we watched the first inaugural flight land on Rota. And as guests were greeted with fresh leis and water our visitors were then officially welcomed by Mayor Inos, who along with PDI president Yoichi Matsumura, extended his support by translating the message to all on his behalf."

Aside from Matsumura and Marciano, a number of big brass from KNT flew to Rota to witness the inaugural charter, among them KNT general manager Makoto Yashiro and KNT-Holiday Package Tours Division general manager Hisaki Taguchi.

They were joined by nine other KNT sales executives who arrived to begin preparations for the promotion and advertisement of the summer program.

Aside from the April 27 inaugural Rota charter flight, two more charters will arrive on April 30 and May 4.

KNT Kinki Nippon Tourist, PDI's parent company, announced in February that it would bring in 40 new charter flights to Rota in the next couple of years.

The Rota charter flights are expected to bring in some 8,000 tourists to Rota in about a year. KNT has chartered Continental Airlines to bring in the new Rota flights. Continental Airlines is using its 155-seater Boeing 737 aircraft to service the island.

## Infants up to one year old are WIC's priority

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN  
rianne\_pangelinan@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The CNMI Department of Public Health Women, Infants, and Children program have placed infants up to one year of age on their priority list due in large part to the big number of people on the program's waiting list.

The United States Department of Agriculture's Food & Nutrition website states that the program is intended to cater to the health needs of low-income women, infants and children up to five years of age.

According to WIC nutritionist Erin Angela Camacho, currently those on the priority list are pregnant women, infants up to one year of age and breastfeeding mothers of those infants.

Camacho explained that "when the western region came in to do our audit [recently], we had such a large waiting list that we had to come up with a priority list."

However, she said WIC is still taking in the names of those

children up to the age of five, but cannot say for sure when the program will get to them.

"The priority list gives us a direction on who those priorities are," Camacho said.

There are 1,200 families on the CNMI WIC waiting list.

According to Camacho, it took WIC about five months to go through the first waiting list since the program opened.

WIC apologizes if the program has caused any inconvenience to anyone who has been placed on its waiting for a considerably long time.

With the growing number of pregnant women in the CNMI, non-pregnant women and children are being bumped down the waiting list.

WIC provides Federal grants to States for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children who are found to be at nutritional risk.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Children with shell leis greet the guests as they disembark from the Continental Airlines plane.

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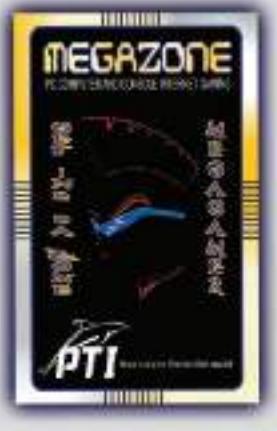
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# Saipan's Tudela hopes to keep his 32 employees

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN  
rianne\_pangelinan@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela

## Bill easing regs for disability applicants pass Senate

The Senate has passed legislation to ease certification requirements for disability retirement applicants.

House Bill 16-81 returns to the House of Representatives for approval of amendments made by the Senate.

Currently, a potential dis-

said he is crossing his fingers that help is on its way from the Saipan legislative delegation to keep his 32 employees from be-

ing laid off.

"So far, there had been no layoffs, terminations or non-renewal. But we are just crossing

our fingers to get needed assistance from the Saipan delegation," Tudela said.

Funds had been recently iden-

tified to keep the employees at least until June 7.

Tudela said that the Office of the Mayor is aware of at least a couple of recently introduced legislations that would help over 160 local government employees whose jobs are in limbo.

"Hopefully, one of those will come to light and help these individuals. By the end of May we should get a pretty good picture of what will hap-

pen," Tudela said.

Most of the affected workers in the Mayor's Office are heavy equipment operators, community service men, and field operators.

Tudela said that, although losing his 32 employees may not "significantly" affect operations and services provided by the Mayor's Office, it will "reduce our community service a little bit."

## May forum updates public on progress at Legislature

can also comment on potential solutions under consideration by the Legislature, and to offer their own ideas.

Further, Sablan plans to circulate two popular initiatives for signatures. One initiative proposes to apply the Open Government Act to the Legislature. The other is to downsize the Legislature.

This Friday, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio will present their annual reports to the Legislature.

Fitial will deliver his third State of the Commonwealth Address at 9am, followed by Tenorio with, his Washington Representative's Report.

The event will be held at the Multi-Purpose Center. (Agnes E. Donato)



### CENTURY TRAVEL HONORED

The Century Travel team receives a trophy for second place in sales with Northwest Airlines at the Northwest appreciation luncheon for travel agents, held April 26 at the Aqua Resort. From left are Cesar, Mr. Parsons (NWA), Marie (NWA), Kelli, Lisa, Jie, Esther (NWA), Chris (NWA), and Selena (NWA).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

An event to benefit higher education in the Northern Mariana Islands

# 6th Annual NMC Foundation Open

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# Julienne R.P. Duenas gets business honor

Julienne R. P. Duenas is the 2008 First Hawaiian Bank *Guam Business* Businesswoman of the Year.

Julienne Rose Perez Duenas is a physical therapist and the owner and clinical director of SOAR (Sports, Orthopedic and Active Rehabilitation Inc.).

Duenas began her work with SOAR in 1999 before taking on sole ownership of the clinic in 2008.

In her spare time, Duenas is a coach with the Shell Guam Youth Drug-Free Basketball League. She also volunteers her time, as a physical therapist, for the Guam Track and Field Asso-

ciation. On weekends and after clinic hours, Duenas provides her service, at no charge, to local athletes who do not have medical insurance.

Duenas takes pride in being a physical therapist as she has the "pleasure of evaluating and treating patients that suffer from a variety of disabling conditions and assisting them with pain management through a variety of modalities, exercises and lifestyle changes."

She impacts many lives, teaching patients how to better take care of themselves.

From 2004 to 2006 she took up a part-time position at the

## New MP magazine now on sale at local outlets

The March-April issue of *MP* magazine is now on sale at numerous locations on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. The *MP* publishing team is especially excited about this issue as it brings local and stateside readers in-depth articles about two topics of major interest to the CNMI.

One feature article, *The Issue of Federalization*, was written by David Cohen soon after he left his position as Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Affairs this past January. It expresses his personal views on the move to federalize the CNMI's immigration system. The piece is especially engaging because Cohen writes from the heart as well as from the mind, thereby displaying his compassion for Pacific island nations and his keen intellect. The publisher of *MP*, Ed Propst, stated, "Being chosen as the purveyor of Cohen's candid statements on the federalization topic and his explanation about how he came to develop his position on issues related to this matter readily demonstrates that *MP* has come of age." In the article, Cohen explains how federalization will bring social and economic benefits to the CNMI while addressing U.S. security concerns.

An accompanying piece on federalization was compiled by *MP* in order to provide readers with a tool for understanding key provisions in the federalization of immigration bill. S.2739 highlights summarizes the duration, key activities, and status of guest workers relative to each of the three stages in the implementation of the proposed legislation, as well as the congressional intent and other key provisions of the bill.

Another feature article, *A National Marine Park in the CNMI-Priceless*, was authored by local entrepreneur Laurie Peterka. This piece, accompanied by stunning photography, presents details about the proposal to set aside the northernmost region of the CNMI, an area of 115,000 square miles, as a ma-



Duenas

Guam Memorial Hospital as staff physical therapist on weekends and holidays for inpatients. At GMH she also evaluated and treated inpatients, providing acute orthopedic post-surgical care, treatments for acute cerebral vascular accidents and wound care, among others, she said.

For 10 years, from 1989 to 1999, she worked with the FHP/PacificCare team as an in-patient physical therapist at one of FHP/PacificCare's hospitals in California, before being transferred to Guam as a physical therapy supervisor.

Before that she was a staff physical therapist at the Providence Memorial Hospital in El Paso, Texas, from

1988 to 1989, where she assisted adult and pediatric orthopedic patients.

Duenas is married to Julito Tingson Jr. and the couple has two sons: Jordan Michael, 13; and Joshua Edward, 9. She is the eighth child of Jose and Rosario Duenas.

She joins Katherine C. Sgro, 2006; and Christine Won Pat Baleto, 2007.

The name of the winner is held secret until the annual gala. The First Hawaiian Bank *Guam Business* Businesswoman of the Year program raises funds for scholarships for the University of Guam, Guam Community College, and the College of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Duenas received the Maga'haga award in front of more than 300 people in a packed ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Guam. (PR)

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# Four NMI lawyers to be sworn in

On May 1, four attorneys will be admitted to the NMI Bar Association at a ceremony to be held at the Supreme Court. The attorneys, all of whom are also licensed in other jurisdictions, passed the February CNMI bar examination.

The four are:

**■ James W. Hofman II**  
Washington University

School of Law  
Attorney at Law, Calvo and Clark, LLP

**■ Braddock J. Huesman**  
Southern Methodist University School of Law  
Assistant Attorney General, Civil Div., AGO

**■ Janet Han King**

University of Nebraska College of Law  
Assistant Public Defender, PDO

**■ Jeffrey L. Warfield Sr.**  
Tulane University Law School  
Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Div., AGO  
Jim Arenovski, president of

the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, will be the featured guest speaker at the admissions ceremony. Maya Kara, president of the NMI Bar Association, will also be welcoming the new members of the bar. The attorney admission ceremony is open to the public and will take place at 10:30am at the Guma' Hustisia. (PR)

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### MMAC meetings today and tomorrow

The Marianas March Against Cancer Committee will meet today, April 29, at 5:30pm, at the Chamolinian Room of the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

There will be a Team Captains meeting tomorrow, April 30, also at 5:30pm at the Chamolinian Room.

The 2008 MMAC Committee is reminding all Committee members to attend the next meeting where vital information regarding the upcoming 2008 MMAC will be discussed. With the event fast approaching, all Committee members are encouraged to attend this important meeting.

All 2008 MMAC Team Captains' are also urged to attend the Team Captains' meeting on Wednesday so that important information may be discussed and disseminated.

The 2008 MMAC will be held from 6pm to 6am on May 16-17 at the Hopwood Junior High School Track & Field in Chalan Piao. The entire community is encouraged to attend the all-night event to show their support in the battle against one of the leading causes of death in the CNMI. (PR)

For more information, contact any Committee member or email Chris A. Concepcion at chrisaconcepcion@gmail.com or Catherine Attao at attao20@yahoo.com. (PR)

### Deadline to buy luminaries

The 2008 Marianas March Against Cancer Committee is reminding all team captains and the public that the deadline to submit luminary forms is next Monday, May 5, 2008. If you or anyone you know is interested in purchasing a luminary for only \$5 to remember those who have lost the battle against cancer or to honor someone who has survived or is currently suffering from cancer, email Kim A. Concepcion at kimconcepcion@yahoo.com or Francella O. Iginoef at franzzy\_7@hotmail.com.

You may also contact any 2008 MMAC Committee member or visit www.ccamarianas.org for more information. Show your support in the fight against one of the leading causes of death in the CNMI and the world. All funds raised go toward the battle against cancer. (PR)

### DEQ Cleanup Brigade activity

The Division of Environmental

Quality cleanup brigade will be at it again, picking up trash from Old Man by the Sea.

If you would like to volunteer your time to clean and beautify our island, meet on Saturday, May 3, 2008 at 8am. Volunteers will clean until 10am and break for drinks and then if continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive a green brigade t-shirt.

The DEQ cleanup brigade began in 1996 and continues to maintain clean, healthy beaches. The last time brigade volunteers cleaned Old Man by the Sea was in May 2005.

For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500. (DEQ)

### Guest Workers Coalition to elect officers

The core group of the Coalition of United Guest Workers (CNMI) is inviting all interested parties to attend a meeting on May 2, 2008, 6:30pm at Oleai Pavilion (near Oleai Beach Bar). The main agenda are election of the first set of officers and finalization of plans for general assembly on May 4, 2008.

For questions, email at irenebdi@yahoo.com.

### Enrollment starts at Sr. Remedios school

Enrollment is now ongoing at the Sr. Remedios Early Childhood Development Center.

- Regular School Day - 7:30 to 11:30am
- Full Day Program - 7:30am to 5pm
- For more information, call 234-6247

### OPA staff to visit Rota, Tinian

Staff of the Office of the Public Auditor will be on Rota today, April 29, 2008 and on Tinian on Thursday, May 1, 2008, to notarize and accept last-minute filings of financial disclosure statements from government officials. Filers on Rota may visit the Rota Mayor's Office from 8am to 3:30pm on April 29. Filers on Tinian may visit the Tinian Mayor's Office from 8am to 4:30pm on May 1. All filers are reminded to bring with them some form of photo identification, such as a driver's license or a passport. Failure to do so may result in the denial of notary services. (OPA)

# Flashback

## A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

### April 29, 1999

#### JAL upbeat on tourist arrivals

Japan Airlines has vowed to bring in more tourists to the Northern Marianas after the Commonwealth Ports Authority decided to provide incentives to various carriers to increase arrivals. The CPA board approved a 50 percent cut in departure and arrival fees effective May 1, 1999 through February 29, 2000 to airlines that can provide an additional 15 percent increase in the average number of passengers that they bring in to the CNMI.

#### Why is Rep. Franks supporting Clinton's tax agenda?

Rep. Bob Franks (R-NJ) has joined the leading Democrat Rep. John Dingell (D-MI) to co-sponsor President's Clinton's proposed \$187 million per year tariff on textiles and apparel products shipped to the mainland U.S. from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the Tribune has learned. Tariffs are taxes and they are bad enough in any form. They are paid by American consumers in higher prices. But the tariff Franks is supporting is particularly egregious because CNMI is part of the United States. It is an official territory of the U.S., like the western area of the U.S. was before it was divided into states.

#### Tenno backs plans to remove retirement benefits

Describing the existing retirement benefits as luxurious, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday threw his full support to plans by the Legislature to cut some of the perks that will be extended to future government employees in order to bring down the government's liability to the Retirement Fund. Key members of the Legislature are drafting a measure that will seek to eliminate retirement benefits, in swift reaction to help the financially-troubled administration reduce its growing unpaid contributions.

### April 29, 2002

#### BoS assures security of bank deposits

The \$6.6 million fraud case allegedly perpetrated by white-collar professionals against the Bank of Saipan will not deter the local banking institution from carrying out its mission, the BoS management assured last week. This, as major shareholders also vouched for the security of the bank's deposits.

#### No report of quake-related damages

A 7.2-strong quake shook the Mariana Islands early Saturday morning, alarming Saipan residents—some of them jolted from sleep—in the second but strongest tremor felt so far in the CNMI this year. But unlike on Guam, where there were reports of injuries and damage to property, there was none so far reported in the CNMI, based on a report by the Emergency Management Office.

#### Youth senators want betel nut spitting penalized

The 4th Youth Congress has passed a bill that would include betel nut spitting and tobacco spitting in the definition of littering, thus making it unlawful to spit betel nut and tobacco in public places. The bill, Youth Congress Bill 4-03, was passed during last week's session. It now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration. If the Legislature considers the bill worthy of passage, a counterpart bill will be passed to make it into a law.

### April 29, 2003

#### CRMO beefs up manpower

CRMO Administrator Joaquin D. Salas yesterday disclosed that he is tapping the services of a Washington-based executive to fill the position of deputy director, which has been vacant for more than four months. The CRMO is now processing the employment document of Steve Willey. Once completed, he will be the second highest official in the agency.

#### Miss Teen buckles down to hard work

Miss Teen CNMI winners disclosed plans to work closely with the Marianas Visitors Authority in promoting the Northern Marianas as a safe destination for tourists. Barely a month after being crowned Miss Teen CNMI, 17-year-old Remylyn Julene Guerrero believes that her duties transcend the pomp and glamour of her title, saying that she's prepared to do more than just parading with her crown and sash.



Left - PV2 Latasia P. Deleon Guerrero and Right - Proud Dad, 1SG (R) Frank C. Deleon Guerrero

# CONGRATULATIONS!

**PV2 Latasia P. Deleon Guerrero** enlisted in the Regular Army and ordered to attend the U.S. Army Basic Combat Training (BCT) at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. She was assigned to A 2/60<sup>th</sup> Inf Regt, 193<sup>rd</sup> Inf Bde. She successfully completed the prescribed graduation requirements and graduated on April 18, 2008. She started her Advanced Individual Training (AIT) on April 21, 2008 and scheduled to complete this phase on June 19, 2008.

Her parents are U.S. Army Retired First Sergeant (1SG) Frank Cepeda and the late Agnes Pangelinan Deleon Guerrero. Present at her graduation ceremony was no other than her proud dad.

Congratulations from the families and friends and may the good Lord keep you safe at all times.

# NMC hosts 3rd Annual Business Concept contest

In an effort to generate and promote new business ideas that would encourage entrepreneurship and economic growth in the CNMI, the Northern Marianas College's Small Business Development Center and Business Department have teamed up to host the 3rd Annual NMC Business Concept Competition, which awards substantial cash prizes to the top four student teams with the best business ideas for the CNMI.

Eight teams composed of students studying business at NMC will be submitting their written business concept papers for initial judging on April 28. Four finalist teams will be selected to present their business concepts to a panel of three judges from the local banking industry. The presentations for the four finalist teams will be made on Friday, May 2. The first place team will win \$1,000, second place \$750, third place \$500, and fourth place \$250.

The competition was designed to achieve four objectives: promote economic development in the CNMI by stimulating viable business ideas; encourage business community mentors to serve as a resource for NMC students pursuing entrepreneurial interests; provide NMC students with hands-on professional experience through which classroom concepts and theories can be applied and tested; and enhance general understanding of the importance of entrepreneurship.

ship to the CNMI economy.

"We are extremely proud of the members of all eight teams that entered the competition. Even though the judges have the task of selecting the four winning teams, all the teams had great ideas and they put a lot of thought and effort into their business concepts," said NMC's Business Concept Competition co-coordinator, D. Rik Villegas.

Competitions like this can be found in Guam, Hawaii, and at many universities in the United States. Some of them are very popular and the entrants often implement their ideas and plans to start successful businesses. It also allows budding entrepreneurs to gain valuable feedback and attract possible investors. In order to be an acceptable business concept, the concept had to be: legal; a for-profit business venture; a business that could be implemented in the CNMI; and *not* a franchise.

It is hoped that this business concept competition will continue as an annual event and that it will stimulate many new business ideas in the CNMI. Even more desirable is that many of those ideas will move from the planning to execution, where it can possibly generate good income for its owners and jobs for employees. The first time the event was held back in 2005, the winning team, Tropical Attitude Magazine, used their prize money to help launch their tourist magazine that targets Chinese visitors to the CNMI.

NMC encourages the com-

munity to show its support for these student teams by attending the finalist presentations on Friday, May 2, from 2pm to 5pm in room D-1 (across from the NMC Bookstore). Admission is Free. Questions can be directed to Eric Plinske, also a co-coordinator for the competition, at telephone no. 234-5498 x1830 or email him at ericp@nmcnet.edu. (NMC)

Donald Blanco and his teammates present their business concept, "Adrenaline Rush," a proposed live shark tour, to the panel of judges and audience during the finalist presentations at the 2007 Business Concept Competition finals at Northern Marianas College.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



## Guam buildup village meetings set

**SANTA RITA, Guam**—The Joint Guam Program Office, in conjunction with the Government of Guam, will hold village meetings in the villages of Yigo, Dededo, Yona, and Mangilao to discuss the status of the realignment of U.S. Forces from Okinawa to Guam.

The meetings will consist of information tables, presentations and a question and answer session, and will offer attendees an opportunity to discuss the realignment with program leaders such as Major General (Ret) David F. Bice, JGPO Executive Director, Captain Robert Lee, Acting Director of JGPO Forward, Rear Admiral William French, Commander, Naval Forces Marianas and other DoD officials.

"Although the meetings are being held in four villages at this time, we recognize the impact this will have on the community island-wide," said Bice. "Residents from other villages are welcome to attend these sessions and we will continue to keep the community informed and engaged in the coming months."

All Village Meetings run from 6pm to 8pm.

May 12 – Mangliao – Mangliao Community Center

May 13 – Yigo – Yigo Gymnasium

May 14 – Dededo – Dededo

Senior Center

May 15 – Yona – Yona Community Center

For more information contact Capt. Neil Ruggiero at 333-2306. (PR)

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FAX: (670) 234-1251

Attorney for Plaintiff:  
BAE, HAK CHON

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE  
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BAE HAK CHON,  
Plaintiff,  
v.  
CHANG, DAE SUNG,  
Defendant.

CIVIL CASE  
NO. 08-0116A  
SUMMONS BY  
PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANT:  
CHANG, DAE SUNG

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within thirty (30) days after the service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Law Offices of Daniilo T. Aguilar, whose address is P.O. Box 505301, First Floor San Jose Court Bldg., Cor. Ghiyeghi St. & Wischira Way, San Jose, Saipan MP 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of Court at the Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of the Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment of default may be taken against you for the relief in the complaint.

By order of this Court.

/s/ Clerk of Courts  
Commonwealth of the  
Northern Mariana Islands

Dated this 17th day of April, 2008.

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# Opinion

## Saipan Tribune

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## EDITORIAL

### A seasoned command

**P**resident Bush has done his successor a great favor by nominating Gen. David Petraeus as the new chief of U.S. military operations in the Middle East and Lt. Gen. Raymond Odierno to replace him as the top commander in Iraq. The two generals worked in close cooperation last year to carry out the "surge" of U.S. forces in Iraq; their counterinsurgency tactics prevented an Iraqi civil war and reduced violence by up to 75 percent. By teaming them again, and giving Petraeus overall responsibility for the region as head of U.S. Central Command, Bush has improved the odds that the next administration will be able to sustain the gains in Iraq while gradually drawing down forces.

Petraeus' appointment also improves the chances that the United States will develop a coherent strategy for facing the multiple threats it now confronts across the Middle East and southern Asia—something it conspicuously lacks. Two weeks ago, Democratic senators sought to score points during testimony by Petraeus by pressing him to concede that the threat from al-Qaida is greater in Afghanistan and Pakistan than it is in Iraq. The questioning, which was reiterated Wednesday by Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., in reaction to the new appointments, overlooks the fact that al-Qaida is now weaker in Iraq precisely because of the military successes of the past year. But the larger point it misses is that Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq are all pieces of a larger problem requiring a comprehensive approach. It's not possible to exclude Iraq from that strategy any more than it would make sense to focus all U.S. resources there.

Petraeus showed during his recent testimony that he recognizes the growing threat to U.S. interests posed by Iran—one that manifests itself not only in attacks by Tehran-backed "special groups" on American soldiers in Iraq and in the ongoing Iranian nuclear program but in support for anti-Western militias and terrorists in Afghanistan, Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. Iran's bid for hegemony over the Middle East must be countered by a sophisticated strategy—one in which diplomacy should play a major role but in which military action cannot be ruled out.

The United States has been slow to learn how to effectively fight the wars that followed the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Odierno, for example, was heavily criticized following his first tour of Iraq in 2003 because the tactics of his 4th Infantry Division were said to have caused excessive civilian casualties and contributed to the Sunni insurgency. Now Odierno and Petraeus are seasoned directors of a new counterinsurgency strategy that incorporates the painful lessons absorbed by the U.S. military during the past five years. By keeping them in the region, Bush will give the next president the opportunity not to repeat his own administration's history of mistakes caused by ignorance, inexperience and illusions. The Senate should swiftly confirm the nominations.

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### Scattergun

#### 5 ul get ya 10

**T**here has been a movement afoot to force CNMI judges to accept a pay cut along with other government employees. You might think that judges are earning too much, but without question they could be earning a lot more in private practice. To attract and keep reasonably talented persons as judges, we need to offer them reasonable incentives. Salaries in the very lowest six-figure range seem fair compensation for such work. We rely on them to be fair and to make difficult and often unpopular decisions for us. They should be paid well to keep them from being too easily swayed by outside influences.

Our CNMI Constitution forbids, and rightfully so, the reduction of a sitting judge's salary. If the Legislature or the Executive Branch was allowed to reduce salaries of the Judicial Branch, judicial independence would be lost and the basic tenet of separation of powers would be lost. Without that separation too much power would devolve to the other branches, leaving the citizenry open to more exploitation.

Contrary to some opinions, I see no reason why a judge cannot voluntarily act to reduce his own salary as a show of solidarity and equality with his fellow government workers should they have to have their pay cut. A judge could opt to donate 10 percent of his salary to the general fund, a particular agency or to some favorite charity if he so chooses. It is extremely important, however, that he or she makes that decision without forceful intervention from other branches of government for the reasons outlined above.

■ ■ ■

#### Twenty more lashes

On another subject, maybe that public job/private job salary difference is what has caused Judge Govendo to jail the Malite estate attorneys for 30 days because he thinks they were paid too much for their services. They got a million-two for their work and he only got a buck twenty for his. They were released after serving their "contempt" time as stipulated. Now he apparently wants to jail them indefinitely without even a hearing, not to mention a trial, until they make him feel better by coughing up the fees. How long can he keep them in jail without a trial? I'm not an attorney, I don't even play one on TV, but I seem to remember something about due process being required to incarcerate people.

■ ■ ■

#### Bring your DD-214

As a reminder to all veterans of the U.S. armed forces, the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs urges all veterans to register with that office as a CNMI resident veteran. It costs nothing but a few minutes of your time and might just lead to getting a VA-sponsored clinic on island if there are enough vets to warrant it. Call Ruth Coleman at 664-2650.

■ ■ ■

### SOUR GRAPES

By BRUCE BATEMAN  
*Special to the Saipan Tribune*

Bruce A. Bateman writes Sour Grapes when the moon is full and the mood strikes. Stay tuned for each exciting episode. "Yes, he is opinionated." Email: [bbateman@pticom.com](mailto:bbateman@pticom.com); Blog: <http://saipanuvian.blogspot.com/>



#### Book 'em Dano

Our new DPS department head, Clyde Norita, seems hell bent on enforcing the laws around here. I don't agree with some of them, the taxi sting, where private property is confiscated without due process as an example ...but that is not the point. Clyde's job is to enforce the law and that is what he is doing. Others have the responsibility to make or change the law. Still others have a responsibility to point out inconsistencies or injustices and try to get lawmakers to amend existing laws or to generate new ones.

Fair, even-handed and equal enforcement of existing statutes is vital to keeping the social fabric intact and gaining the respect and cooperation of citizens in abiding by our laws. Mr. Norita seems intent on making the presence of the police visibly known and making sure they enforce as fairly as possibly. He and his officers should be commended.

■ ■ ■

#### Advertisio Flagranto

A case in point would be false advertising claims. A matter for the Attorney General rather than the police. We see a lot more of the "bait and switch" tactic advertisements published around here than would be allowed in a U.S. market or other world markets. In this scheme, an item is advertised, when the customer arrives it is not in stock and no "rain check" is allowed for later purchase. It is of course suggested you buy the higher priced item they just happen to have.

Airlines seem to be among the most flagrant violators of false prices advertising. You know the drill, the \$329 to Hong Kong fare emblazoned across the newspaper ad really adds up to a \$740 ticket when all the fine print is read and they are finally ready to charge your credit card. In fact, there is a phrase called "plusplus" currently in use here that describes this; I'm sure you have heard it many times. "How much is the new airfare to Hawaii?" goes the question. "\$1,200 plus plus plus plus plus" goes the response.

Others similarly guilty would be grocery stores, department stores and others offering sales on items they actually have in very limited stock. Another area that could use some enforcement is price tags

*See SCATTERGUN on next page*

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

# An Olympic force for change

By SUE MENG  
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

**A**rash of protests disrupted the Olympic torch relays in San Francisco, Paris and London. Hu Jia, a Chinese activist, was sentenced to 3 1/2 years in prison this month for "inciting subversion" of Communist Party rule. The central government continues to crack down on unrest in Tibet. What was to be a triumphant medal count for China is quickly becoming a tally of its human rights abuses. It looks as if the Olympics are doing little to change China, and China is doing a lot to change the Olympics.

But the Chinese government is one thing; 1.3 billion Chinese people are another.

It is important not to conflate China with the Chinese government. The Olympics have stirred an enormous outpouring of nationalism within China and among Chinese abroad. We should not dismiss Chinese nationalism as part and parcel of the Communist machine. Nationalism has forged civic engagement, cutting across groups normally divided by age, class and geography. This engagement leads to greater awareness of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Far from legitimizing an authoritarian regime, the Olympics foster the kind of nationalism that will help the Chinese carve out a civil society, which may be the best antidote.

Already the Games have become a rallying point for millions of Chinese eager for China to take its place on the international stage. China's turbulent history in the 20th century makes clear why hosting the Olympics strikes a deep chord of national pride: In a single

lifetime, millions of Chinese will see the pendulum swing from the famine and isolationism of the 1950s to recognition and global integration in 2008. From all corners of the country and from overseas, Chinese are flocking to Beijing to witness history. The Olympics galvanized Chinese nationalism. Chinese nationalism will change China.

Nationalism in China does not necessarily mean a blind capitulation to government's repressive tendencies. Increasingly, there is a civic dimension to Chinese nationalism. Zhu Xueqin, a professor at Shanghai University, argues that compared with 10 years ago, people today are more aware of their "civic rights," which include the right to information, the right to question the authority of the government and the right to be protected from retaliation.

Cases have already arisen in which ordinary citizens claimed their status and rights as citizens and sued for those rights. Often, these lawsuits have been brought against land developers and local officials who have run roughshod over individuals. In 2007, Zhu Lifeng, a farmer in Zhejiang province, became the first man to win a lawsuit against the local government for demolishing his farmhouses without his consent. Although the success rate in cases against the government is still extremely low, the number of people aware that such a right exists is growing. People have also exercised their right to vote in village elections and used popular investigative news programs and publications to expose wrongdoings by local officials. Certainly, these are the bright lights of a generally repressive regime, but in their glow we see a changed understanding of what it means to be Chinese.

A good sign for the future of the rule of law and human rights in

China is that national identity is increasingly determined by civic groups and virtual communities rather than by the government alone. To be "Chinese" is no longer whatever state propaganda says it is. Moreover, people are less dependent on the government to satisfy their basic needs. Charities, clubs and associations of all kinds are booming. Lily Tsai, a political scientist at MIT, has shown that in villages of similar size, wealth and location, the determining factor for whether there is effective provision of public goods — such as paved roads, safe drinking water and working schools — is the presence of such organizations as village lineage groups and temple committees. Insofar as it establishes common ground and encourages the growth of civil society and communal associations, nationalism might be just what China needs.

Americans see Chinese nationalism and point to the dangers — such as how it fuels the crackdown in Tibet. But for us to be a constructive part of change in China, we must recognize the advantages of Chinese nationalism. China won't be goaded to change. The last time China faced international pressure from without and massive rebellions within, a 300-year dynasty collapsed and the country barreled into civil war. If the goal is real change, not just moral condemnation, the key is to look at forces within China.

Today's growing civic engagement might one day be an effective check on an authoritarian state. The Olympics provide the catalyst for the Chinese to rally around a collective identity. China will have its moment in the sun. What follows is the harvest.

*The writer, a Rhodes Scholar with a degree in modern Chinese studies from Oxford, is a student at Yale Law School.*

## Letters to the Editor

# Our Marine Monument

I was a bit disappointed by the recent legislative resolution against our proposed marine monument in the Northern Islands. I too was a bit apprehensive when I first heard the proposal back in December of 2007. Years ago, my parents taught me to look twice before crossing the street. Nowadays I look four or five times before I take those first steps. I guess that was good advice since I have never been hit by a car. All of us have learned that lesson. So I understand the Legislature's abrupt reaction and united stand against our proposed marine monument. They have justification. The U.S. government has screwed over everybody. But it has money. The CNMI

has received millions of dollars in federal aid over the years. What most people do not know is that the federal government did not propose our marine monument; the Pew Foundation did after a thorough analysis of possible worldwide sites for a marine monument. PEW did not push this proposal, it simply presented it to the CNMI. Since the legislative resolution against our marine monument, Pew has moved on. The decision to proceed is ours. So after reading this letter, write to the editor, governor, President of the U.S. and voice your opinion. For or against. It is your right. Use it. I do. That is the voice of the people.

As I understand it, the resolution

against our marine monument included "at this time." Well, let's get MVA to do a quick study as to the dollar value of additional eco-tourism that would result from our marine monument. Fish and Wildlife should do a study as to the impact on subsistence fishermen and commercial fishermen. We should have hearings to hear from the public as to how they feel about our monument. The Chamber of Commerce should have some input as to the impact on their businesses. That would be appropriate before there is a final decision.

Pew stressed that it was important to make the decision during the Bush administration since Pew has already done the legwork and everything has been presented to the President. And it may be slam dunk. Let's go back to crossing the street. Let's really look at the potential and make a decision.

We can always submit our own proposal at a later date to the next president in office. This is not our only or last chance to grab this golden ring. Hopefully, at a later date, we have someone here that knows how to do the legwork. So, let us not burn this bridge now before we have the chance to fully look it over. Governor Fitial personally should let President Bush know that we are still thinking about our NMI Marine Monument and we remain undecided at this time. And let him know it sounds good. You do not have to ante up in this hand. You can always change your mind later. Let's look and then play our cards before we fold. Governor, do you really want to fold on a multimillion dollar pot before you see all of our cards?

To the legislators, your past and current legacy is nepotism, cronyism, abusive labor laws, corruption, etc.

Wouldn't you rather have your grandchildren see your name on our monument that preserves the largest marine sanctuary in the world? Otherwise you pass on as just another stained politician without merit. The choice is yours. Leave something positive that your family can brag about, forever.

The CNMI needs a future. It needs a plan. At this time, our possible marine monument with its additional eco-tourism, federal injection of funds, and benefits is all we have. Oh yeah, the other choice is gambling in/on La Fiesta. Let's go for the real gold ring. The Legislature can make our monument happen by using foresight and sound judgment. Yeah, I know that is an oxymoron, but I am an optimist. Write a letter.

**Brad Doerr**  
*San Roque, Saipan*

# Rota school needs a better leader

I read with great interest the various letters to the editor about a petition to oust Lynne Michael, the principal of Rota High School. I graduated from Rota High School two years ago, and I find it necessary to take a stand so that the education of RHS students remains a priority. If the board members have the best interests of the students in mind, then I request that they heed the petition and remove Mrs. Michael as principal.

Mrs. Michael lacks basic leadership and professional skills. As a former RHS student, I have firsthand knowledge of her antics. On countless occasions, she was belligerent, incredibly to a level found only in a dictator.

While serving as principal, Mrs. Michael would disparage students, including myself, in front of the entire class. I still remember clearly my classmates' discontented faces

after receiving stinging words from Mrs. Michael. She would publicly humiliate and ridicule students. These were not isolated occasions but they are the norm under her administration. How does this behavior show compassion and concern for a student's emotional well-being and self-worth?

She made a teacher cry after yelling at her in the classroom in front of students. What does this say about

respect and leadership? Her actions caused a well-respected teacher to retire. How does this reflect professionalism? She cancelled a prom because of one student's mistake; never mind that a prom makes high school a more memorable experience. How does that show fairness and balance? There are many more issues and facts that I can mention, but the point is that her actions have now caused parents to be concerned

about their children's development and success.

During their 180 school days each year, high school students need a professional, effective and fair leader for a role model. Unfortunately, Mrs. Michael is not suitable for the role. She should leave her post for the sake of the students and faculty.

**Donald Manglona**  
*San Antonio, Texas*

## SCATTERGUN

From Page 10

on merchandise. The law clearly stipulates that all items will carry price tags. They are actually found on less than 30 percent of the items in stores here. These gripes fall pretty far down on the priority list of enforcement when budgets are cut to the bone and affected agencies are short of personnel.

■ ■ ■

### Bigamy gets expensive

While I am a proponent of user fee based charges for government services,

one that rankles is the "police report." A couple of years ago one stood in two different lines at the Guma Hustisia, paid \$5 and came away with a sheet of paper that said you had no adverse police record. Now we still stand in the lines but pay \$15; the fee has tripled. If the House of Representatives has its way, we will soon pay \$30 for the same 4 milliseconds of computer time and one minute of personnel time. Can we say gouge?

HB 16-90 seeks to increase user fees for a variety of licenses, permits and services offered by or enforced by our government. In a couple of months

you will be paying more, a lot more, for your driver's license, your car and boat registration, your copies of public documents and a many more items required by government fiat. Even marriage licenses are due to go up in price. Try not to get more than one.

Hidden inside 16-90 are some other "fundraising" ideas. It calls for a reduction from 18 percent to 11 percent on copayments made by the government to employees retirement fund benefit plan. Considering that no, nada, zero payments have been made into the Retirement Fund the last two years and darned few in the last eight

years, it is hard to conceive of how any money will be saved by paying less in the future. Less than nothing is...well, still nothing.

Some reprogramming of funds by the Governor and the legislative delegations will be allowed if 16-90 passes into law and CUC will be allowed to spend, yes, spend the deposit money it holds in trust for its customers. Additionally, a few million here and there will be shuffled around, mostly to benefit and subsidize CUC so it can buy fuel. Why does CUC need money to buy fuel? Because the Legislature restricted how much they could charge.

This sounds a bit like the revolving door principal at work.

■ ■ ■

**Quotes of the week:** REPRESENTATIVE, n. In national politics, a member of the Lower House in this world, and without discernible hope of promotion in the next.

—Ambrose Bierce (1842 – 1914)

Moses dragged us for 40 years through the desert to bring us to the one place in the Middle East where there was no oil.

—Golda Meir (1898 – 1978) former Prime Minister of Israel

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: [www.pr.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.pr.noaa.gov/guam/)

# The Weather

## 5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

**▲83° ▼76°** **▲84° ▼77°** **▲84° ▼76°** **▲84° ▼76°** **▲83° ▼76°**

### Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲83 ▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲87 ▼75
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲88 ▼76
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲83 ▼74
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲83 ▼73
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲88 ▼75
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	▲85 ▼75

### Around The Globe

Auckland	Thunderstorms	▲72 ▼53
Beijing	Sunny	▲80 ▼66
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲78 ▼70
Honolulu	Cloudy	▲81 ▼73
London	Rain	▲52 ▼38
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲74 ▼56
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲87 ▼76
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲59 ▼47
Miami	Cloudy	▲86 ▼69
New York	Partly Sunny	▲61 ▼42
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲74 ▼56
Paris	Rain	▲53 ▼35
Pusan	Partly Sunny	▲74 ▼62
Rome	Cloudy	▲68 ▼50
Salem	Rain	▲48 ▼38
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲59 ▼47
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲72 ▼55
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲70 ▼60
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲63 ▼44

### Tides

Saipan Harbor	
3:11AM Today	High Tide: 1.7 Feet
8:49AM Today	Low Tide: 1.3 Feet
12:52PM Today	High Tide: 1.4 Feet
8:26PM Today	Low Tide: 0.2 Feet

### Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:55AM	6:34PM	Today	12:59AM	12:39PM
Wednesday	5:54AM	6:34PM	Wednesday	1:40AM	1:32PM
Thursday	5:54AM	6:35PM	Thursday	2:19AM	2:25PM
Friday	5:53AM	6:35PM	Friday	2:58AM	3:19PM
Saturday	5:53AM	6:35PM	Saturday	3:38AM	4:16PM

### Moonrise/Moonset

Today	5:55AM	6:34PM	Today	12:59AM	12:39PM
Wednesday	5:54AM	6:34PM	Wednesday	1:40AM	1:32PM
Thursday	5:54AM	6:35PM	Thursday	2:19AM	2:25PM
Friday	5:53AM	6:35PM	Friday	2:58AM	3:19PM
Saturday	5:53AM	6:35PM	Saturday	3:38AM	4:16PM

## GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

### PICTURES

■ ISLAND SNAPSHOT Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

### BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

### BUSINESS

Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

### SAMUT SARI

Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

### TRAVELOGUE

Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

### CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

### REQUIREMENTS

#### For pictures:

■ Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.

■ Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).

■ Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.

■ Photos must have been taken in the last two months.

■ For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

#### For announcements:

■ Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

■ Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

### HOW TO SUBMIT

■ E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee\_vallejera@saipantribune.com.

■ Fax: (670) 235-3740

■ Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950

■ Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan.

To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747.

### POLICY

■ The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.

■ The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.

■ For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 8, 2008

### DEPARTURES

#### Saipan-Rota

CO 9313 8:30am 9:05am 3,4,7

#### Saipan-Guam

CO 9317 4:00am 4:50am Daily

CO 9597 8:30am 9:20am 1,2,5,6

CO 9313 8:30am 10:00am 3,4,7 via Rota

CO 9601 12:30pm 1:20pm Daily

CO 9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily

CO 9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily

CO 9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily

### ARRIVALS

#### Rota-Saipan

CO 9598 11:10am 11:45am 1,2,6

#### Guam-Saipan

CO 9316 2:30am 3:20am Daily

CO 9596 7:00am 7:50am Daily

CO 9598 10:15am 11:45am 1,2,6 via Rota

CO 9600 10:45am 11:35am 3,4,5,7

CO 9602 2:00pm 2:50pm Daily

CO 9604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily

CO 9606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily

#### Narita-Saipan

NW 078 8:40am 2:00pm Daily via Nagoya

NW 075 4:45pm 7:25pm Daily Nagoya

#### Saipan-Osaka

NW 083 4:20pm 7:10pm Daily

#### Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078 8:40am 11:25am Daily

#### Saipan-Manila

CO 895 4:45pm 6:35pm 6

CO 895 6:45pm 8:35pm 3

CO 890 9:15am 2:55pm 6

CO 890 11:45am 5:35pm 3

PR 111 6:00am 7:45am 1,2,4,6,7

# Business

## Britain's rich get richer

LONDON (AP)—The collective wealth of Britain's 1,000 richest people went up by nearly 15 percent last year, and more than half the country's 75 billionaires are foreign-born, according to a list published by the Sunday Times newspaper.

The newspaper's annual Rich List ranked steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal as Britain's wealthiest man for the fourth year running. It put the Indian-born tycoon's fortune at 27.7 billion pounds, or \$55 billion, up more than 8 billion pounds from last year.

Russian oil magnate Roman Abramovich, owner of London's Chelsea soccer team, was in second place, with wealth of 11.7 billion pounds, or \$23.2 billion.

The Duke of Westminster

was in third place with 7 billion pounds (\$14 billion). The Briton owns huge parcels of land in central London and elsewhere.

Indian-born industrialists Ari and Gopi Hinduja were in fourth place with wealth of 6.2 billion pounds (\$12.4 billion). Russian steel and mining magnate Alisher Usmanov was ranked fifth with wealth of 5.7 billion pounds (\$11.4 billion).

The newspaper said more than half of Britain's 75 billionaires—including 14 of the 20 richest people—are foreign-born.

Queen Elizabeth II—the country's richest person when the Rich List was first published in 1989—now ranks 264th, with a personal wealth of 320 million pounds (\$640 million).

## Continental says it won't seek merger

DALLAS (AP)—Continental Airlines Inc. said Sunday it would not pursue a combination with another carrier right away, a surprising move after weeks of growing speculation that it would join with United Airlines to create the world's biggest airline.

Continental Chairman and Chief Executive Lawrence Kellner said in a message to employees that the Houston-based airline was better off alone than merging.

"We have significant cultural, operational and financial strengths compared to the rest of the industry, and we want to protect and enhance those strengths—which we believe would be placed at risk in a

merger with another carrier in today's environment," Kellner told employees.

Although it reported an \$80 million loss in the first quarter, Continental is widely viewed as the second-strongest U.S. carrier in financial terms, behind only Southwest Airlines Co., which has indicated it isn't interested in a merger.

While Kellner ruled out a merger for the time being, Continental appeared to leave the door open to an alliance with another carrier. The airline has reportedly discussed such an arrangement with AMR Corp., the parent of American Airlines, in which the companies would work together in many ways but not merge their operations.

Airlines have been considering consolidation as a way to cut costs as they face the strain of record fuel prices. Delta Air Lines Inc. announced earlier this month it has agreed to buy Northwest Airlines Corp. in a stock-swap deal that would create the world's largest carrier. A Continental-United combination would have trumped Delta-Northwest in size.

A United spokesman did not immediately return a call

for comment.

"Every U.S. carrier, including Continental, is under enormous pressure from record high fuel prices, a slowing U.S. economy and a weak dollar," Kellner told employees. "In today's harsh environment, we must continue to adjust our business model to ensure we successfully navigate through these difficult times, so that in the future we can once again grow and prosper."

## Chavez threatens to expropriate steel maker Sidor

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—President Hugo Chavez threatened on Sunday to expropriate Venezuela's largest steel maker due to what he said are the soon-to-be-nationalized

### BUSINESS BRIEFS

#### Wall Street looks for cues from Federal Reserve meeting

NEW YORK (AP)—What a difference six weeks makes. Right before the last Federal Reserve meeting, investors were worried about the global banking system imploding. Now, investors are betting the credit markets are on the mend and Wall Street is looking forward to an economic recovery. But the market wants to hear this week that the Fed is confident, too. The central bank's policy makers meet Tuesday and Wednesday to decide whether to lower interest rates again, and to issue an updated assessment of the U.S. economy and financial system. Most investors believe the Fed will lower rates by another quarter percentage point but will also suggest they are gearing up for a pause.

#### Buffett, Munger will again field shareholders' questions

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—The wisdom of billionaires Warren Buffett and Charlie Munger will be on display again next weekend when the two men field questions from a throng of Berkshire Hathaway Inc. shareholders. About 30,000 people are expected to fill the Qwest Center Omaha arena Saturday for the Omaha-based holding company's annual meeting. The question-and-answer period, when Berkshire's chairman and vice chairman spend more than five hours responding to nearly anything, is usually the highlight of the meeting.



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HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

## JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcement #	Position/Title	Pay Level /Step	Per Annum	Minimum Requirements	Closing Date	Location
PSS-063-2007	EDUCATION SPECIALIST I-IV (CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) & COUNSELING COORDINATOR) (Non-Certified Application) (In-House Promotional Opportunity)	31-35 / 01-12	\$23,706.21-\$49,266.21	<b>Education Specialist I</b> - Applicants with Bachelor's degree in Education or Education Administration, plus two (2) years work related experience in teaching, designing and implementing subject program and/or training of teachers and specialists. <b>Education Specialist II</b> - Applicants with Bachelor's degree in Education or Education Administration, plus fifteen (15) Graduate Semester Hours plus four (4) years work related experience in teaching, designing and implementing subject program and/or training of teachers and specialists OR Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in Education or Education Administration, plus six (6) years work related experience in teaching, designing and implementing subject program and/or training of teachers and specialists. <b>Education Specialist III</b> - Applicants with Master's degree in Education or Education Administration, plus five (5) years work related experience in teaching, designing and implementing subject program and/or training of teachers and specialists OR Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in Education or Education Administration, plus fifteen (15) Graduate Semester Hours plus seven (7) years work related experience in teaching, designing and implementing subject program and/or training of teachers and specialists. <b>Education Specialist IV</b> - Applicants with Master's degree in Education or Education Administration, plus six (6) years work related experience in teaching, designing and implementing subject program and/or training of teachers and specialists OR Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in Education or Education Administration, plus fifteen (15) Graduate Semester Hours plus eight (8) years work related experience in teaching, designing and implementing subject program and/or training of teachers and specialists. <b>Education Specialist V</b> - Applicants with Master's degree in Education or Education Administration, plus six (6) years work related experience in teaching, designing and implementing subject program and/or training of teachers and specialists.	April 29, 2008	PSS Associate Commissioner of Education For Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment
PSS-2008-021	COMPUTER SPECIALIST III (Erate Network Program Support) (Non-Certified Application) (In-House Promotional Opportunity)	27, 29, 31 / 01-12	\$19,511.46-\$40,531.43	<b>Computer Specialist I</b> - Applicants with BA degree, plus two (2) years work related experience OR High School graduate, plus six (6) years work related experience. <b>Computer Specialist II</b> - Applicants with BA degree, plus three (3) years work related experience OR High School graduate, plus seven (7) years work related experience. <b>Computer Specialist III</b> - Applicants with BA degree, plus five (5) years work related experience OR AA degree, plus seven (7) years work related experience.	April 29, 2008	PSS Administration-Erate Network Program

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MAY OBTAIN A DETAILED JOB DESCRIPTION WITH QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION FORMS AT THE PSS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE AT THE 3rd RETIREMENT BUILDING, CAPITOL HILL. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST BE ATTACHED TO COMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS: (1) COPY OF DIPLOMA/DEGREE, (2) TRANSCRIPTS, (3) POLICE CLEARANCE (FROM PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR PAST SIX MONTHS), (4) VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT LETTER, (5) RESUME, AND (6) TEACHING CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE). COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE OR MAILED TO: CNMI PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, ATTN: HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE, RETIREMENT BUILDING, THIRD FLOOR, P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950, AND TEL. # (670) 237-3051, FAX # (670) 664-3707. ALSO VISIT <http://www.pss.cnni.mp/humanresources> ON THE WORLDWIDE WEB.

# Nation

## Hundreds flee Los Angeles wildfire

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### **Ballpark funeral held in Ohio for long-missing soldier**

CINCINNATI (AP)—Military workers and supporters from across the country joined in memorials Sunday for a slain Army reservist who had become a poignant picture of the war in Iraq after he was captured by insurgents. Thousands walked past Staff Sgt. Matt Maupin's casket during a daylong visitation at a civic center in Clermont County, east of Cincinnati, where he grew up. Many of them headed to Great American Ball Park, home of the Cincinnati Reds, for an afternoon memorial service. The crowd occupied the lower portion of the 42,000-seat stadium, behind home plate, stretching from first base to third.

#### **Clinton: Afghanistan needs more US attention**

WILMINGTON, N.C. (AP)—Hillary Rodham Clinton said the assassination attempt Sunday on the Afghan president shows that the U.S. has failed to give proper attention to Afghanistan. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the assault that missed President Hamid Karzai but killed three and wounded eight others at a ceremony in Kabul. Gunman opened fire as a 21-gun salute echoed over the capital at an anniversary ceremony marking the mujahedeen victory over the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Clinton noted how she had met Karzai, and said, "He is a brave man trying under very difficult circumstances to hold that country together, and we have not given him the resources he needs." Afghanistan needs to get "as much, if not more attention" than Iraq, she added.

#### **Officials: Truck carrying migrants crashes in Ariz.; 4 dead**

PHOENIX (AP)—A truck jammed with as many as 60 illegal immigrants crashed and rolled in a remote part of central Arizona on Sunday morning, killing four and injuring many. The truck was carrying possibly 50 to 60 people, many of whom ran into the desert, said Vanessa White, spokeswoman for the Pinal County Sheriff's Office. The driver is believed to be among them. Investigators believe the people on board were illegal immigrants, White said. Four men were pronounced dead at the scene, while 27 survivors were taken to hospitals. White did not know their conditions. Speed and possibly alcohol are believed to be factors in the 5:30 a.m. crash near the town of Arizona City, about 60 miles south of Phoenix, White said. She did not have details on the truck.

#### **SC teen charged with killing family had recently moved home**

EASLEY, S.C. (AP)—A teenager who had recently moved back home after breaking up with his live-in girlfriend is accused of gunning down and killing four family members, stunning friends and neighbors. Nathaniel Dickson, 18, was arrested Saturday night at a home in Belton about 20 miles from where the bodies of his father, stepmother, stepsister and younger brother were found, authorities said. Those who knew Dickson grappled with how the quiet teen who loved video games and sports now was charged with four counts of murder. Authorities would not talk a possible motive.

## Investigators say millions in Iraq contracts never finished

WASHINGTON (AP)—Millions of dollars of lucrative Iraq reconstruction contracts were never finished because of excessive delays, poor performance or other factors, including failed projects that are being falsely described by the U.S. government as complete, federal investigators say.

The audit released Sunday by Stuart Bowen Jr., the special inspector general for Iraq reconstruction, provides the latest snapshot of an uneven reconstruction effort that has cost U.S. taxpayers more than \$100 billion. It also comes as several lawmakers have said they want the Iraqis to pick up more of the cost of reconstruction.

The special IG's review of 47,321 reconstruction projects worth billions of dollars found that at least 855 contracts were terminated by U.S. officials be-

fore their completion, primarily because of unforeseen factors such as violence and excessive costs. About 112 of those agreements were ended specifically because of the contractors' actual or anticipated poor performance.

In addition, the audit said many reconstruction projects were being described as complete or otherwise successful when they were not. In one case, the U.S. Agency for International Development contracted with Bechtel Corp. in 2004 to construct a \$50 million children's hospital in Basra, only to "essentially terminate" the project in 2006 because of monthslong delays.

But rather than terminate the project, U.S. officials modified the contract to change the scope of the work. As a result, a U.S. database of Iraq reconstruction

SIERRA MADRE, Calif. (AP)—An early season wildfire slowly chewed its way through dense brush near Los Angeles on Sunday, forcing more than 1,000 people from homes in the foothills.

More than 400 firefighters attacked the 350-acre fire, aided by two helicopters and water-dropping air tankers, said Elisa Weaver of the Arcadia Fire Department. Residents evacuated at least 550 homes Saturday night and Sunday, but none had burned.

"This is pretty serious," Weaver said. "Some of these areas have not burned in over 40 years."

Smoke and fire billowed near neighborhoods on the outskirts of Sierra Madre near Bailey Canyon Wilderness Park. The fire moved slowly as it fed on brush and was estimated to be 5 to 10 percent contained. It is expected to continue burning for another two or three days.

Winds were calm early Sunday, boosting firefighter efforts, Weaver said.

Helicopters made water drops Sunday morning on a steep ridge above Sierra Madre, about 15 miles northeast of Los Angeles and just east of Pasadena. A fixed-wing water tanker also made at least one drop of flame retardant.

The blaze also stranded 50 guests from a wedding party at the Chantry Flats ranger's station on Saturday until they were airlifted out Sunday afternoon, Weaver said. It took five helicopter trips from the ranger's station to the parking area where the wedding party's cars were. The party then was escorted out by road.

The fire was first reported Saturday afternoon in a wooded area a few miles northeast of Pasadena. It was windy at the time and unseasonably hot, with temperatures approaching 100 degrees.

The flames also brought the evacuation of a Boy Scout camp Saturday and left about 100 hikers stranded in a parking lot. Most of the Scouts had already left the camp by the time the evacuation was ordered, Weaver said, and no injuries were reported.

A Los Angeles county hand crew and fire fighters work to put out hot spots in the foothills of Sierra Madre. The blaze started Saturday night in the Angeles National Forest north of Sierra Madre and grew to 270 acres threatening homes and forcing evacuation, Sunday, April 27, 2008, in Sierra Madre, Calif. AP

**Series of quakes takes toll on rattled residents of Reno**

RENO, Nev. (AP)—Dozens of minor earthquakes shook Reno on Sunday as a series of temblors entered its third month and prompted some frazzled residents to leave their homes.

More than 150 aftershocks have been recorded on the western edge of northern Nevada's largest city after a magnitude-4.7 quake hit Friday night, the strongest quake in a sequence that began Feb. 28. There were no reports of injuries or wide-

spread damage.

Scientists have urged residents to prepare for worse, saying the recent activity is unusual because the quakes started out small and continue to build in strength.

After being awakened as many as four times a night by quakes, retiree Sandra Petty decided to spend nights 10 miles away at the Sparks home of her daughter, Stefanie McCaffrey.

"The quakes have sent her emotions and nerves into a tail-

spin," McCaffrey said Sunday. "She was exhausted, and she couldn't relax or unwind. She just needed to get away so she could have a good night's sleep."

Keith Phillips said he's going to live somewhere else, possibly with his children, until the activity settles down. He lives about a block from the epicenter of Friday night's quake, which cracked walls in his house and pushed one of his garages off its foundation.

"I grew up in the Bay Area

and went through some major quakes down there," Phillips told the Reno Gazette-Journal. "Since we're right on top of the epicenter, I've never felt anything like this."

The strongest aftershock Sunday measured 3 and was recorded shortly before 11 a.m.

Three other quakes larger than magnitude 3 have struck areas scattered hundreds of miles apart across northern Nevada since Friday night's 4.7 quake in Reno.

## Californians head to the coast but keep eye out for sharks

SOLANA BEACH, Calif. (AP)—Beachgoers looking to escape triple-digit temperatures inland stayed cautiously along the water's edge on Sunday as miles of sea front remained closed following a deadly shark attack near San Diego.

Parents kept close watch over their bodyboarding or wading children, looking up with alarm at pods of dolphins whose fins broke the glassy water beyond the surf.

There was no sign of the shark, believed to be a great

white about 15 feet long, that killed triathlete David Martin on Friday. Coast Guard and San Diego County sheriff's helicopters continued to patrol the coastline, watching for signs of trouble.

Seventeen miles of coastline—from Torrey Pines State Beach to south Carlsbad—that closed for the weekend were expected to reopen Monday morning. Beaches farther north were crowded as inland temperatures soared.

A few intrepid surfers con-

tinued to ignore the shark advisory.

Dan Latour of San Diego said he didn't think twice about fleeing stifling heat to practice his skimboarding technique at Tide Beach, where Martin was taken to shore Friday.

"It was just so hot so we decided to come out here," said Latour, 30.

His friend Debra Oppenheimer said she figured they would be safe as long as they didn't go in too deep.

"I probably wouldn't go

surfing or snorkeling in a wet suit, looking like a seal," she said as she spun the board in shallow water.

Martin's oldest son, Jeff, 41, said at a news conference that no one in the family ever imagined a shark attack in Solana Beach.

"People would ask us about sharks and we would laugh," he said. The attack happened despite "staggering odds," he said, and he had no qualms about going surfing Saturday at the same beach where his father died.



# Asia

## Olympic torch begins North Korea leg

**PYONGYANG, North Korea** (AP)—The Olympic torch began its first-ever run through North Korea on Monday, where the flame was assured of a trip free of the anti-Chinese protests that marked other legs of the relay.

An attentive and peaceful crowd of thousands watched the start of the relay in Pyongyang, some waving Chinese flags, in live footage from broadcaster APTN. The event was presided over by the head of the country's rubber-stamp parliament who often acts as a ceremonial state leader, Kim Jong Nam.

the Olympic torch relay Sunday in Seoul, throwing rocks and punches at the latest stop on the flame's troubled round-the-world journey.

A North Korean defector tried to set himself on fire to halt the relay, where thousands of police guarded the flame from protesters blasting China's treatment of North Korean refugees.

But the small groups of anti-China demonstrators were far outnumbered by seas of red-clad Chinese supporters who waved red national flags as they took to the streets of the South Korean capital to defend the torch.

■ ■ ■

North Korea is one of the world's most tightly controlled countries, where citizens are not allowed to travel freely and

civil rights are restricted by the iron-fisted regime.

Kim passed the torch to the first runner Pak Du Ik, who played on the 1966 North Korean World Cup soccer team that made a historic run to the quarterfinals. As he began the 12-mile route through Pyongyang, thousands more cheering people lined city streets waving pink paper flowers and small flags with the Beijing Olympics logo.

The relay began from beneath the large sculpted flame that tops the obelisk of the Juche Tower, which commemorates the national ideology of "self-reliance" created by the country's late founding President Kim Il Sung, father of current leader Kim Jong Il. Kim Jong Il was not seen at the event.

## China train collision kills at least 43

**BEIJING** (AP)—A pre-dawn collision Monday between two passenger trains in eastern China killed at least 43 people and injured 247, a state news agency reported.

Witnesses said a train traveling from Beijing to coastal Qingdao city derailed and hit a second train at about 4:40 a.m., Xinhua News Agency said.

The crash happened in the city of Zibo in Shandong province. The second train had been traveling from Yantai to Xuzhou.

News photos showed the derailed train laying at the bottom of a ditch, with rescuers removing passengers from a carriage that had fallen onto its side.

Survivors with white sheets wrapped around their shoulders



In this photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency, the site of the trains colliding accident is seen in east China's Shandong Province Monday, April 28, 2008.

stood or sat near the wreckage. The second train did not fall into the ditch, but a news photo showed one of its carriages resting perpendicular to the track.

The head of the Ministry of Railways, Liu Zhijun, was headed to the site to oversee rescue efforts, the Web site of the Shandong government said.

In January, 18 people died

when a train hurtling through the night at more than 75 mph slammed into a group of about 100 workers carrying out track maintenance near the city of Anqiu in Shandong province.

Xinhua said the latest accident had cut traffic on the Jinan-Qingdao railway, which links the provincial capital of Jinan with Qingdao.

sidents in Myanmar and exile groups elsewhere have urged voters to vote against the constitution, saying it is merely a ploy to perpetuate more than four decades of military rule. Voting ahead of the May 10 referendum by Myanmar citizens has already begun in some countries including Japan and Singapore, where about a thousand people lined up outside their country's embassy Sunday.

### 3 human rights activists barred from Hong Kong

**HONG KONG** (AP)—Three human rights activists who planned to protest during Hong Kong's leg of the Olympic torch relay have been barred from entering the Chinese-ruled territory, one of the activists said Sunday. The alleged denial of entry came days before the torch's arrival in Hong Kong on Wednesday—its return to Chinese soil after a global tour marred by protests against China's human rights record. Protests were also expected when the torch arrives in this former British colony because it enjoys Western-style civil liberties, including the freedom to protest, which are denied in the mainland. The three activists—Danish sculptor Jens Galschiot and his two sons—were questioned for almost six hours upon arriving from Denmark on Saturday, said cameraman Niels Madsen, who traveled with the trio to document their activities in Hong Kong.

### Security tight in Myanmar amid possible protests

**YANGON, Myanmar** (AP)—Security was tightened Sunday in Myanmar's largest city as rumors spread that pro-democracy activists would launch protests against an upcoming referendum on a draft constitution backed by the ruling military. Riot police and junta supporters carrying batons were deployed at major road junctions and Buddhist monuments including Yangon's famous Shwedagon Pagoda, the site of many earlier demonstrations in the staunchly Buddhist country. Dis-

## Three killed in militant attack on Afghan proxy

**KABUL, Afghanistan** (AP)—Militants firing rockets and automatic rifles attacked the Afghan president at a ceremony in Kabul on Sunday, missing their target but killing three and wounding eight others.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the assault that sent President Hamid Karzai and foreign ambassadors scurrying for cover, underscoring the fragile grip of his U.S.-backed government.

Gunmen opened fire as a 21-gun salute echoed over the capital at an anniversary ceremony to mark the mujahedeen victory over the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Hundreds of people, including army and police that had formed an honor guard inspected by Karzai minutes

earlier, fled in chaos as shots rang out. The president was hustled away, surrounded by bodyguards, and left in a convoy of four black SUVs.

The gunfire apparently came from a three-story guesthouse, popular with migrant laborers, about 300 yards from the stands where Karzai was seated alongside Cabinet ministers and senior diplomats, who all escaped unharmed. A U.S. Embassy official confirmed U.S. Ambassador William Wood was also not hurt.

A lawmaker who was about 30 yards from the president was killed in the attack.

Residents reported that a 30-minute gunbattle broke out between security forces and gunmen holed up in the guesthouse, located in a neighborhood of ruined mud brick buildings.

Defense Minister Gen. Abdul Rahim Wardak said three attackers were killed by security forces, and assault rifles and machine guns were confiscated.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said six militants were deployed to target the president, and three of those militants died in the attack. He said they were armed with guns, rockets and suicide vests although no suicide bombings were reported.

The initial moments of the attack, which came as a marching band played the finale of the national anthem, were broadcast live until TV transmissions were cut. Hundreds of dignitaries could be seen diving for cover. Two lawmakers were hit by the gunfire. One of the men slumped back in his seat, while the other lay on the ground.



**PREPARING FOR THE WORST**

Anti-riot police in their "umbrella formation" to protect themselves from rocks thrown by protesters during an exercise and competition among different police district Saturday, April 26, 2008 in Manila. It was also a part of their training in preparation for bigger protest actions due to rice issue and higher prices of oil and commodities.

## Rebels: Truce with RP govt may falter

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—A cease-fire between Islamic rebels and government forces in the southern Philippines could falter if Malaysia withdraws dozens of peacekeepers from the region, peace activists and the guerrillas warned Sunday.

Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak said Thursday his government would start withdrawing its personnel next month. The Malaysians make up the bulk of a 60-man foreign contingent safeguarding a 2003 cease-fire between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation

Front, which has been waging a decades-old insurrection.

Rebel negotiator Mohagher Iqbal said Sunday it would be difficult to prevent occasional conflicts between troops and rebels from erupting into full-blown fighting without the foreign peacekeepers.

Other Muslim extremist groups and armed groups opposed to the peace talks could also take advantage of the lack of peacekeepers to launch attacks, he said.

The foreign peacekeepers "have been responsible for bringing down the incidents of

violence in Mindanao to almost zero," Iqbal said, referring to the southern home region of minority Muslims in the predominantly Roman Catholic country.

"If they leave, it follows that the violence can return," he said.

There used to be hundreds of skirmishes each year in the region, but the number has plummeted since the peacekeepers arrived in 2004. Last year, only seven clashes erupted, including one on southern Basilan island that could have turned into a major battle had the Malaysians not intervened, according to the military.

# World

## Iraq Green Zone shelled amid sandstorm



An Iraqi Army soldier uses a flashlight to signal cars to turn off their headlights as a sandstorm envelops central Baghdad, Iraq on Sunday, April 27, 2008.

AP

**BAGHDAD** (AP)—Suspected Shiite extremists hammered the U.S.-protected Green Zone Sunday in the fiercest salvo in weeks, apparently taking advantage of a sandstorm that blanketed the capital and grounded the American aircraft that normally prowl for launching teams.

Thunderous explosions resounded throughout the evening as rockets or mortar shells slammed into the heavily fortified area in central Baghdad.

Anti-U.S. cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, meanwhile, rejected terms set by the Iraqi government for lifting a crackdown against his Mahdi Army militia.

Sirens wailed in the Green Zone, which houses the U.S. Embassy and much of the Iraqi government on the west side of the Tigris River. The public address system warned people to “duck and cover” and stay away from windows.

The U.S. Embassy confirmed the area was hit by indirect fire,

the military’s term for rocket or mortar attacks, but said it had no immediate word on casualties.

The Green Zone has been regularly shelled since fighting broke out over a U.S.-backed government crackdown against militias that began in late March. At least four Americans, including two soldiers, have been killed in the attacks.

But the U.S. military has claimed success with operations that have effectively sealed off the southern

section of Baghdad’s Sadr City, a militia stronghold that is believed to be one of the prime launching sites for the Green Zone attacks.

American commanders have blamed what they call Iranian-backed Shiite factions they say have broken with a cease-fire imposed by al-Sadr in late August.

Al-Sadr’s spokesman in the holy city of Najaf called the Shiite-led government’s terms for stopping the crackdown against the militias “illogical.”

### WORLD BRIEFS

#### Report: Banker named as new Haiti PM

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti** (AP)—President Rene Preval on Sunday chose an international banking official to be the troubled country’s next prime minister, Haitian radio reported. Radio Metropole said that Preval has designated Ericq Pierre, a senior official with the Inter-American Development Bank, to succeed ousted Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis. The report could not be independently confirmed immediately. The Haitian Parliament must approve the nomination to the country’s No. 2 political post. It was not immediately known when lawmakers would take up the matter.

#### Chavez confirms he will work for release of US hostages

**CARACAS, Venezuela** (AP)—President Hugo Chavez said Sunday he would attempt to facilitate the release of three Americans held captive for more than five years by Colombia’s largest rebel group. Chavez offered to help free the three U.S. defense contractors a day after meeting with New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson. Richardson traveled to Caracas to recruit the socialist leader as mediator in a possible exchange of hostages for imprisoned guerrillas. “I told him that we’re at their service, to try to help even though the issue is very complicated,” said Chavez, speaking during his weekly television and radio program. Chavez helped pave the way for the release of six captives earlier this year.

#### Tougher stance vs Mugabe a must

**HARARE, Zimbabwe** (AP)—The top U.S. envoy for Africa urged the international community on Sunday to take a tougher stance against Zimbabwe’s longtime leader Robert Mugabe. Jendayi Frazer’s comments came as Zimbabwe’s electoral commission said it was getting closer to releasing the results of the presidential vote one month after the election. Frazer said the most immediate priority was to halt increasing violence against opposition supporters, an apparent attempt to intimidate people ahead of a possible election runoff. “There’s no neutrality when people are being beaten,” Frazer, the assistant secretary of state for African affairs, said in an interview with The Associated Press in Zambia.

## Morocco detains 2 after factory fire kills 55

**CASABLANCA, Morocco** (AP)—Police detained the owner and manager of a Casablanca mattress factory that went up in flames, killing at least 55 people, a police official said Sunday amid accusations of poor safety standards and locked doors that trapped workers.

Rescue workers found one more body Sunday and a sniffer dog was seen uncovering body parts a day after the blaze at the factory, located in a poor industrial neighborhood on the rim of Morocco’s sprawling economic capital.

The latest official death toll was 55, including the most recently discovered body, and six people remained hospitalized, Morocco’s official news agency said, quoting the wilaya, or local government. The death toll had initially been reported at 55, then was lowered only to climb again.



Firefighters remove the bodies of some of the victims of a fire that broke out in a mattress factory Saturday, April 26, 2008 in Casablanca, Morocco.

Factory owner Adil Moufareh and his son Abdelali, the plant manager, were detained for questioning, a police official for the factory district of

Hay Hassani told The Associated Press by telephone. Radio Medi-1 and some other local media also reported the arrests. The official was not authorized

to speak publicly about the fire and asked not to be identified by name.

Authorities differed over the reasons for the high death toll, with Casablanca’s governor, Mohamed Kabbaj, attributing it to the large number of people working at the time—100—as well as the presence of flammable products.

However, the head of Casablanca’s civil protection unit, Mustapha Taouil, said that, in addition, doors were reportedly locked.

“We have information that the factory was closed, locking in the employees, which turned some of them into victims,” Taouil told AP Television News. His report echoed accusations by some factory workers who said the owners had locked the doors, apparently to prevent the fire from spreading and save their merchandise.

## French vintners flirt with heresy—screw tops for wines

**CHABLIS, France** (AP)—Fine French wine with a screw top?

At La Cote Saint Jacques restaurant, a Michelin three-star temple of gastronomy in the Burgundy region, chief sommelier Arnaud Laplanche isn’t ashamed to give it a try.

He’s part of a quiet revolution sweeping the French wine

business, the world’s largest and fighting to stay that way.

France’s goal: to hold off New World winemakers that have wooed wine lovers and gained market share with jazzy marketing campaigns, helpful information on what’s inside the bottle, and quality assurances that some French wines lacked.

Screw tops, boxed wines, colorful easy-to-understand labels and sophisticated marketing—innovations pioneered by countries like Australia and South Africa—are making inroads in tradition-bound France, even if many still sneer.

“We didn’t see the danger coming from the New World—where

competition came with a completely new approach to wine making,” said Renaud Gaillard, deputy head of the French Federation of Wine and Spirits Exporters.

“Finally we understood we had to change not only production but also the way the product is presented. We had to make the buying process easier.”

# Overdrive

## Europe's favorite SUV crosses to America

By DAN NEIL  
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

As a company, Suzuki often seems a riddle wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma, stuffed into a slightly shoddy handbag that smells of cheese.

On the one hand, you have the motorcycle side of the company, maker of end-times miracles such as the Hayabusa and the GSX-R. These are completely and utterly fantastic bikes, virtually without peer, especially if you like going 300 mph in first gear. The company also makes scooters, ATVs and outboard motors, and I hear they are pretty good too.

On the other hand, you have the automotive side of the business. I wonder if, given the uneven track record of American Suzuki, a busload of auto execs and a busload of Suzuki Method violin teachers somehow got switched, and now eager 5-year-olds are learning how to charge extra for undercoating.

Certainly, the car operations have seemed feckless. In 2003, American Suzuki announced a sales goal of 200,000 autos by 2008. But the company's sales have leveled off at about 100,000 units for the past two years, hamstrung by less-than-compelling offerings such as the XL7 mid-size SUV (a platform partner with GM's Chevy Equinox) and Daewoo-built tragicomedies such as the Reno and Forenza, which go away after model year 2008.

Suzuki wants to turn things around: A new mid-size truck (based on the Nissan Frontier) is coming to the U.S. this fall, an Acura-battling mid-size sedan is due in 2009 and the Swift sub-compact will return in 2010.

There's also talk of a home-grown hybrid model. But for now, Suzuki's sexiest product is the SX4 Crossover, which has the distinction of being the

best-selling small SUV in Europe and the cheapest and most fuel-efficient all-wheel-drive vehicle sold in the U.S.

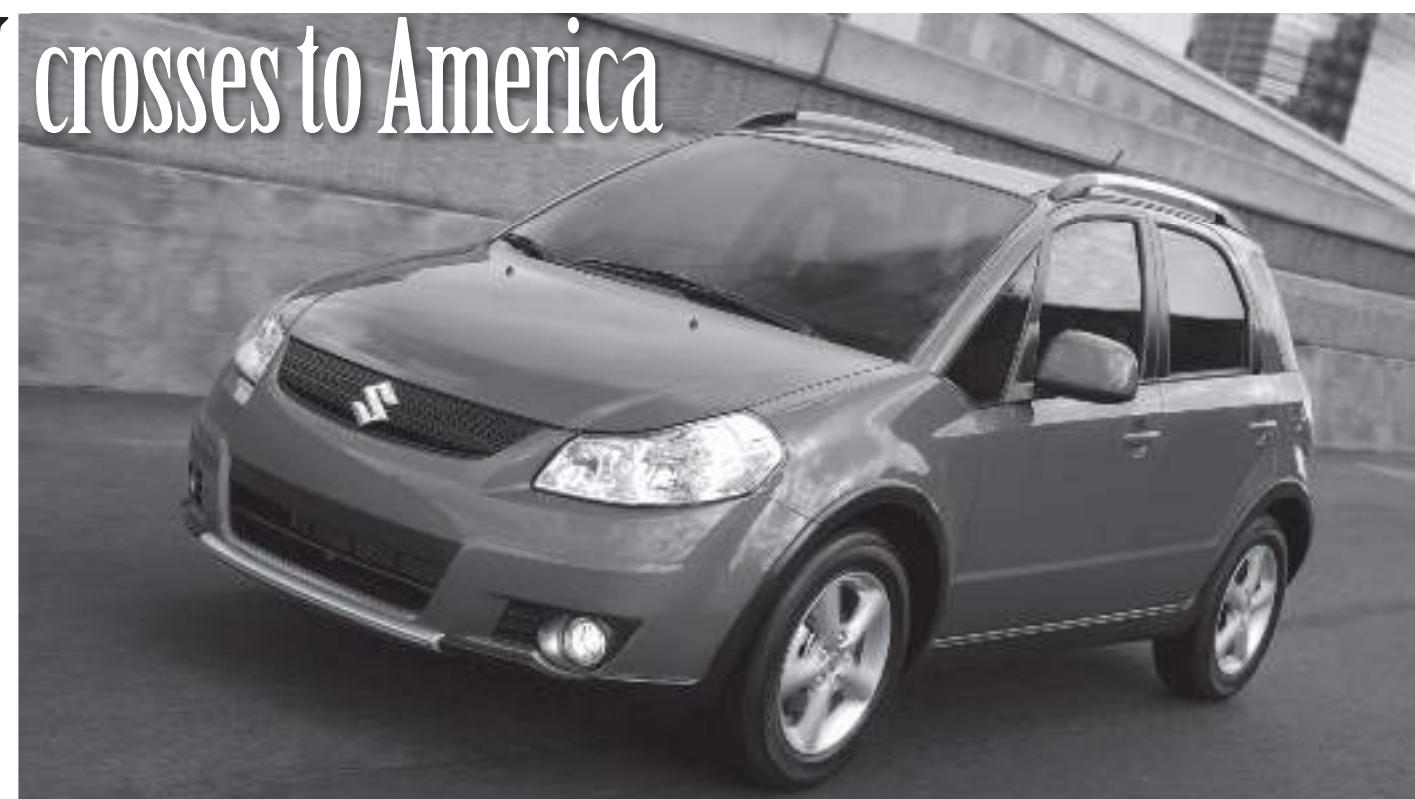
And yet, "cheap" is such a harsh word. Tell you what: Think of the SX4 Crossover as a slow and homely, extremely affordable Bugatti Veyron.

In many parts of the country, all-wheel drive is all but indispensable. Cleverly, the SX4-C, with a manual or automatic transmission, provides three traction modes: front-wheel drive (a mode that offers slightly better fuel economy), AWD automatic (shifting power from front to rear wheels as needed) or AWD "lock," for low-speed, low-traction conditions.

Suzuki's "intelligent" AWD system is, in comparison to Audi's Quattro, a bit of a dolt; still, it's perfectly adequate to get you back and forth to work.

The fuel economy ratings for the car -- 21/28 mpg, city/highway -- are a lot more enticing if you keep in mind that a car stuck in the driveway gets zero miles per gallon.

I really like this car and I search my notebook to see why. Well, it's a tidy and cute design, with lots of go-its-own-way charisma. But that's not enough. It's got good but certainly not unmatched rear storage space -- about 16 cubic feet behind the rear seats, and 43 cubes with the rear seats folded (loaded to seat back height). The rear seats are



LOS ANGELES TIMES  
The 2008 Suzuki SX4 Crossover is the best-selling small SUV in Europe and the cheapest and most fuel-efficient all-wheel-drive vehicle sold in the U.S.

adequate, but the SX4-C will never find work as a gypsy cab.

I associate the sense of well-being with some of Suzuki's subtle ergonomic choices. The seat height -- that is, the height of the seat off the floor -- is quite tall, providing a natural upright seating position. At the same time, the sill lines (where the windows meet the body) are very low and the windshield slopes away almost out of sight, so the outward sightlines from the tall saddle are terrific. These design choices are quite deliberate, as you can tell by the car's strangely forked A-pillar. Suzuki wanted maximum glass

around the driver.

In any event, being able to see out of a car instantly puts me at ease. This warm well-being could also be because the thing is so cheap.

Our \$16,870 test car, in Touring trim, trundled out the door with alloy wheels, four-wheel disc brakes, stability control, six air bags, fog lamps, keyless entry, leather-wrapped steering wheel, a six-CD, nine-speaker audio system with MP3 and iPod connectivity. That's a lot of stuff. If buyers don't find all that compelling, they can wait until the 2009s roll in to dealerships. It will be the first model under \$16,000 to offer a navigation system as standard equipment.

All-wheel drive, nav, alloy wheels, good stereo? That's pretty much everything on my personal must-have punch list -- that and 600 hp.

What's it like to drive? Pretty entertaining, all things considered. The car feels tight and well sorted. All the black rubber-and-plastic bits fit together well. The seats are firm and supportive. The instrumentation glows cheerfully, with an orange jack-o'-lantern beam. In overall soundness and vacuum-packed solidity, the Suzuki's interior decor compares well with that of the Mazda3,

which is the benchmark of overachieving cheapness.

Once under way, the 2.0-liter lump of aluminum under the hood is surprisingly willing and hearty, especially when stirred by the five-speed manual transmission (the automatic has four ratios). The little car nips around town lightly. Steering is tight and direct, likewise with braking.

The 0-to-60 mph acceleration hovers in the low-9-second range, but the more important 0-30 mph -- the step-off acceleration -- is quick enough that no one will think the SX4 is short

on ponies.

Well, not no one. Suzuki has entered into a partnership with tuner Road Race Motorsports, which has fashioned a turbocharger kit for the SX4, bumping horsepower from the modest 143 hp to an entirely immodest 221.

Question: Will the seven-year/100,000-mile warranty apply to a car with this turbocharged grenade stuck under the hood?

A sporty Suzuki on four wheels? Now there's a concept.

*Neil is the Times' automotive critic.*



LOS ANGELES TIMES

The interior of the 2008 Suzuki SX4 Crossover is comparable to the Mazda3's. A navigation system will be standard in the '09s.

## Oil price rise has many causes, experts say

By TOM INCANTALUPO  
(C) 2008, NEWSDAY

Gas prices hit another record Monday, leaving consumers to wonder: Will it ever stop?

There's plenty of blame to go around for the latest surge in prices, which this year have gone from high to record-breaking to downright scary.

That's due in part to investors and speculators, who are investing in commodities like oil as safer investments than stocks

and bonds because of the weak U.S. dollar.

Speaking of the U.S. dollar, it has declined in value against key foreign currencies -- by 9 percent this year.

There's also the growing thirst for oil by China, India and other large developing countries, which is creating demand that threatens to outstrip supply.

The surge in oil prices in turn is affecting the costs of virtually everything shipped

by truck, of heating homes, of getting to work or even taking the boat for a spin or making plans for a vacation this summer.

In New York futures trading Monday, crude oil rose to more than \$117; when Americans awoke on New Year's Day the \$100 mark hadn't been breached. The price of heating oil, a product nearly identical to diesel fuel, soared this winter also because of rising world demand for diesel.

Short term, the U.S. government has a few options to bring prices down, experts said, but most are politically tricky.

An increase in production by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries also might help take pressure off supplies, but most OPEC nations already are running at full capacity and OPEC ministers insist that it is primarily investors who are driving the price of crude oil through the roof, not a shortage of supply.

### CRUISIN'

## Radials vs bias ply

By GREG ZYLA  
(C) 2008 KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

**Q:** Greg, I have a '66 Plymouth Fury III convertible. The previous owner put P255/75R-14 steel-belted tires on it, and although I have had no problems, I've heard you should not put radials on older wheels as they can sometimes cause breaks or cracks.

Since my wheels were not designed for radials, can you recommend a good replacement that will allow use of my original hubcaps? Also, what was the original tire size for my Fury? — Jim E., West Plains, Mo.

**A:** Jim, the professional tire people I spoke to all said if your wheels were going to break, they already would have.

Two tire specialists in Pennsylvania said they had never seen wheel cracking on a car like yours because radials were installed. However, one of them did say he had seen a few problems on cars older than yours.

I next spoke with Laura at Coker Tire, known nationwide as the No. 1 source of tires and wheels for collector cars. She agreed that some tires can break an already weakened wheel when an owner switches from bias ply to radial tires. She said radial tires put more stress on a wheel, as they run in a "side to side" motion.

Laura said she can either recommend a bias ply for your wheel, or a wheel for your radials if it would make you sleep better at night. I gave her your address and she is sending you a catalog. Laura also said your Fury II came from the factory with 735x14 bias ply on the six-cylinder model, and 775x14 on the V-8.

Contact Coker Tire at 1-866-513-2744, or visit its Web site at [www.cokertire.com](http://www.cokertire.com).

*Write to Greg Zyla in care of King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or send an e-mail to [gzyla@ptd.net](mailto:gzyla@ptd.net).*

# Life & Style

## Here comes the bride...all dressed in white

The first ever Bridal Fair and Party Exhibit, held Saturday and Sunday at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan, culminated with a Bridal Fashion Show that glittered with the pomp and pageantry of luxurious weddings, complete with a resplendent bower, multi-layered cakes, and studio butterfly lights that showed off to best advantage the many dresses and clothes that one can wear to a wedding.

Male and female models showed off wedding dresses and tuxedos provided by Ginza Couture Naoco, Island Floral, Bridal Fashion, and First Floral. Oscar Yema, who organized the event, said that Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan and Saipan Grand Hotel hope to parlay the success of Sunday night's show into an annual attraction.

Here are some pictures of the event:



**The 14 brides and  
13 grooms of the 1st  
Bridal Fashion Show.**

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hair and makeup by John Kyle, center, of Hibiscus Salon. Models, from left to right, real couple Dan and Aya and Marissa McGuire and Joemer.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hair and makeup by Eddie Uy, center, of Hair Expectations Salon. Models Vanessa and Gary, left, are wearing ensembles designed by Monique of Island Floral and Bridal Fashion. Aggie's gown and Leo's tuxedo are by First Floral.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hair and make up by Sharmaine, center, of ASK Beauty Salon and Dress Shop. Models are Ray and Judy from Korea and Haoting and Nigel.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hair and makeup by Delia, center from Genovevas. Models, from left, Francis and Beverly (gown designed by Monique of Island Floral and Bridal Fashion), Minako and Dexter (gown and tuxedo by Ginza Couture Naoco).



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hair and makeup by Renren Santos, third from right. Models, from left, Jonathan Grayson, Taylor, Maya, and Dmytri, are wearing Ginza Couture Naoco ensembles.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hair and makeup by Tammy of Genovevas. Models, from left, are Ryan Sanciangco, Tamara, Ivan, Tara White, and real couple Archee and Gary.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Evening makeup creation by Renren, center, who is joined here by Victoria, Yvette, and Arielle.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Evening Party models Monique, Amanda, Britney, and Michelle.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Wear a Marconi models: Standing, Dexter, Jonathan, and Ryan. Foreground, Nigel and Leo.

# 100-year mystery: Did Indiana woman get away with murders?

LAPORTE, Ind. (AP)—Asle Helgeli didn't believe Belle Gunness' claims that his brother, missing for months after answering the widow's lonely hearts ad, had left her northern Indiana farm for Chicago or maybe their native Norway.

Suspicious after a bank said his brother, Andrew, had cashed a \$3,000 check—a large sum in 1908—the South Dakota farmer came to LaPorte and discovered his brother's remains in a pit of household waste.

A century later, modern forensic scientists hope to solve once and for all what appears to have been a web of multiple murders, deceit, sex and money orchestrated by a woman dubbed Lady Bluebeard, after the fairy tale character who killed multiple wives and left their bodies in his castle.

Many locals believed Gunness staged her death in a farmhouse fire, 100 years ago Monday, before Asle Helgeli's arrival to cover up years spent poisoning and dismembering more than two dozen people.

Forensic anthropologist Andi Simmons grew up in the area east of Chicago hearing tales of the LaPorte black widow.

"There was always a sense of, what if she's still out there? What if she's lurking around," said Simmons, who decided to explore the case as part of her thesis.

Gunness probably killed at least 25 people and possibly as many as 33, Simmons said. The exact number isn't known because authorities never thoroughly searched the farm property after



In this photo released by The Laporte County Historical Society is a undated photo of Belle Gunness on display at the Laporte County Historical Society Museum in LaPorte, Ind., Tuesday, April 22, 2008.

Committee, said some residents wish the story would fade away. But programs leading up to the anniversary of her death have drawn many who are eager to share their own tales.

John Olsen, 87, of nearby Schererville, said at a recent anniversary program that Gunness, a Norwegian immigrant, had a reputation among Norwegian families as a great foster mother.

He said Gunness took in his aunt, Jennie Olsen, at 7 months old after her mother died. Jennie decided to stay with Gunness when she got older, even after her father remarried.

"Jennie had many opportunities to come and join her siblings ... and went back to Belle because Belle was the only mother she had ever known," Olsen said. "And Belle gave her an excellent home."

However, Jennie Olsen's body was the second discovered when authorities began digging after the 1908 fire, and many believe she had been killed two years earlier because she uncovered her foster mother's secrets.

The woman arrived in Chicago from Norway in 1881 at age 21, and married three years later. After her first husband died, Gunness moved to LaPorte, where she met Peter Gunness. They married in April 1902, but he died later that year when a sausage grinder and jar of hot water fell on him.

In both cases, family members believed the husbands' deaths were suspicious, Johnson said. And in both cases, Gunness collected thousands in insurance money.

After Peter Gunness' death, his widow advertised in Midwestern Nor-

wegan-language newspapers for a potential mate. One read: "A woman who owns a beautifully located and valuable farm in first class condition, wants a good and reliable man as partner in same. Some little cash is required and will be furnished first class security."

Though Gunness was a plain, 5-foot-8 woman who weighed as much as 280 pounds, her letters were eloquent, Johnson said.

"She wrote wonderful letters, very encouraging," he said. "She would tell them about how lovely LaPorte was."

The coroner declared Gunness dead after her dentures were found in the fire debris two weeks later. But many believe she paid someone to plant the dentures—which Simmons said were found intact and not burned.

When authorities determined the fire was arson, suspicion turned to a handyman who had worked for Gunness and had been her lover. He was convicted of arson but acquitted of murder.

For a quarter of a century, Gunness sightings were reported all over the country.

The last came in 1931, when a woman named Esther Carlson died in Los Angeles while awaiting trial on charges she killed her employer. Carlson resembled Gunness, was about the same age, and there was no record of her before 1908, Simmons said.

Simmons' team exhumed a body believed to be Gunness' from a Chicago-area cemetery in November. The casket contained body parts from two children—but they did not belong to the foster children reported to have died in the fire. They could be remains of other victims whose remains had been buried in the basement and were inadvertently scooped up in the ashes, Simmons said.

"Now we don't know whether we're adding two more people to our body count," she said.

## DC to launch nation's first European-style bike share

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—More Washingtonians could be pedaling to meetings on Capitol Hill and other appointments when the city launches the nation's first European-style bike-sharing service next month.

The program, called SmartBike D.C., is similar to car-sharing services like Zipcar. Users must sign up for a \$40 annual membership to gain access to a network of bikes stored at computerized racks around the city. To unlock the bike, users simply scan their access cards. The bikes can be used for up to three hours at a time and can be returned at any SmartBike station. In the beginning at least, there won't be any hourly charges.

The District of Columbia program is starting small, with just 10 stations and 120 bikes. In contrast, Paris started its service last summer with more than 10,600 bikes at 750 stations. But D.C. officials are eager to expand it quickly if the response is good. Proponents say the program easily could be expanded to more than 1,000 bikes at more than 100 stations within a year.

"This is one more transportation option for residents, visitors and workers," said Jim Sebastian, who runs the D.C. Department of Transportation's bicycle programs.

At the current size, the bike share is unlikely to make a dent in easing congestion on city streets or crowding on the subway, Sebastian acknowledged. But "if it works and we expand it, then it will," he said.

SmartBike is run by Clear Channel Outdoor Holdings Inc., which handles bus-shelter advertising for D.C. The company runs the bike-share

ing programs in 13 European cities, including Barcelona, Spain, and Oslo, Norway.

Clear Channel Outdoor started its first bike-sharing program in Rennes, France, in 1998, said Martina Schmidt, the company's director of Smart-Bikes. The company sees it as another free outdoor amenity, like bus shelters, that it can offer cities and use to generate advertising revenue.

In most cities where the program operates, advertising is attached to the bike stations or on the bikes themselves. In D.C., there won't be advertising initially, but that could change if the program is expanded, Schmidt said.

Still, the city didn't have to spend any money to set up the program because it is part of its bus-shelter contract with Clear Channel Outdoor. Sebastian said the city likely is getting a smaller percentage of the revenue from bus-shelter advertising because of the costs associated with the bike program, but officials haven't put a number on the lost revenue.

Paul DeMaio, who owns bike-sharing consultancy MetroBike LLC, said a program like Clear Channel Outdoor's costs about \$4,500 per bike to start. Beyond the bikes themselves, that figure includes capital costs associated with the computerized bike racks, he said.

DeMaio is working with neighboring Arlington County, Va., on its own bike-sharing program that could launch as soon as the fall, he said.

Clear Channel Outdoor has an exclusive contract to run a bike share in San Francisco, but officials are still working out the details, Schmidt said. She said she hoped the program would launch sometime in 2009.



Jim Sebastian, with the District of Columbia's Department of Transportation, poses with a SmartBike DC prototype bicycle in Washington on Thursday April 24, 2008.

Washington is the first North American city to try this type of bike share, according to DeMaio and D.C. officials. More primitive programs, in which bikes were just left unlocked on the street, were previously attempted in some U.S. cities, including Portland, Ore.

Those programs flopped, with bikes "stolen within a matter of hours or days," DeMaio said.

In 1995, Copenhagen, Denmark, improved on the concept with fixed stations for picking up and dropping off bikes. That system operates on a coin-deposit locking system.

The specially designed SmartBikes that D.C.

will use are three-speed, upright "comfort" bikes. They feature mudguards to prevent the rider from getting wet, chain guards to keep clothes from getting caught, front and rear lights that turn on in the dark and easily adjustable seats.

"I call it a no-excuses bike," Sebastian said. "'I don't have the right shoes,' 'I'm wearing a dress,' 'I don't want to get wet'—none of those are good excuses with this bike."

Actually, there is arguably one good excuse: not having a helmet with you. SmartBike users are strongly encouraged to wear helmets, but they have to bring their own.

# Bush tweaks candidates at annual dinner

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—President Bush poked fun at his potential successors Saturday night, expressing surprise that none of them were in the audience at the White House Correspondents' Association annual dinner.

"Senator McCain's not here," Bush said of GOP nominee-in-waiting John McCain. "He probably wanted to distance himself from me a little bit. You know, he's not alone. Jenna's moving out too."

Bush then referred to scandals that have dogged the campaigns of the two remaining Democratic candidates, Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama, in explaining their absence: "Hillary Clinton couldn't get in because of sniper fire and Senator Obama's at church."

During the ongoing campaign, Clinton mistakenly claimed to have landed under sniper fire in Bosnia as first lady. Obama's longtime Chicago pastor has been criticized for his negative comments about America.

The president admitted to being "a little wistful" in his final appearance at the dinner, showing video clips of his routines from previous years. He finished by conducting the U.S. Marine Band in a medley of patriotic marches.

Bush was followed by Craig Ferguson, the host of CBS' "Late Late Show."

The Scottish-born Ferguson found middle ground between the tepid impersonations of last year's entertainer, Rich Little, and the merciless satire that Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert delivered in 2006.

Ferguson, who became a U.S. citizen in February, asked Bush what he was going to do after leaving office, then suggested, "You could look for a job with more vacation time." The president has drawn criticism for the amount of time he has spent away from the White House during his presidency.



President Bush, left, stands on a chair next to David J. Rivelli, one of two recipients of the Deborah Orin Scholarship, during the annual dinner of the White House Correspondents' Association, Saturday, April 26, 2008, in Washington. AP

Vice President Dick Cheney, Ferguson said, "is already moving out of his residence. It takes longer than you think to pack up an entire dungeon."

The guest list for the dinner included plenty of VIPs from outside the Beltway: Actors Ben Affleck, Jennifer Garner, John Cusack, Pamela Anderson and

## 'Baby Mama' delivers \$18.3 million at weekend box office

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—"Baby Mama," Tina Fey and Amy Poehler's comedy about surrogate motherhood, delivered the No. 1 spot at the weekend box office with \$18.3 million in ticket sales, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The Universal Pictures laugher starring the "Saturday Night Live" duo crawled past Warner Bros.' "Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay," the goofy stoner flick that opened at No. 2 with \$14.6 million.

With a third comedy, Universal's "Forgetting Sarah Marshall," holding its own at No. 4 with \$11 million, audiences looked to be flocking to theaters to get giddy.

"Comedy is definitely king right now," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of tracking firm Media By Numbers LLC. "Audiences are definitely showing an interest in going to the movies and having a good time and having a laugh."

Lionsgate's kung fu movie "The Forbidden Kingdom" starring Jackie

Chan and Jet Li fell two notches to No. 3 with \$11.2 million.

Critics had questioned Universal's decision to release "Baby Mama" so closely on the heels of "Forgetting Sarah Marshall," thinking it would cannibalize the comedy-seeking public.

"I think there's something to be said about the Hollywood myth that you can't open a comedy against a comedy," said Nikki Rocco, Universal's president of distribution. "We just proved that to be wrong."

The success of the first "Harold & Kumar" sequel also showed audiences are not too sensitive to laugh at post-Sept. 11

topics like terrorism. The movie premise begins with the pair getting in trouble trying to sneak a bong on a flight to Amsterdam, then escaping the U.S.-run prison for alleged terrorists in Cuba.

"I don't think anybody takes this too seriously," said Dan Fellman, Warner Bros.' president of theatrical distribution.

The sequel cost just \$12 million to make and is already close to beating the



Actors Tina Fey, left, and Amy Poehler attend the opening night of the Tribeca Film Festival with the world premiere of "Baby Mama" at the Ziegfeld Theater, Wednesday, April 23, 2008 in New York. AP

entire theatrical take of \$18.2 million for the first "Harold & Kumar" movie.

"Hopefully we'll do somewhere in the \$40 million range," Fellman said.

It was the second straight weekend that has shown better revenue than the previous year, following four "down" weekends, Dergarabedian said. The weekend gross for the films measured was up 17 percent at \$91 million.

For the year to date, however, box office revenue is down 2.7 percent at

Claire Danes, singers Ashlee Simpson and the Jonas Brothers and author Salman Rushdie were among the invitees. Washington's power elite was still well represented, with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia and Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff in attendance.

During the event, the White House Correspondents' Association presented its annual awards, announced earlier this month, to:

■ Deb Riechmann of The Associated Press and Ed Henry of CNN, the Merriam Smith Award, the top journalism award for White House reporting under deadline pressure.

Riechmann, the winner in the print category, won for her coverage of President Bush's trip to Iraq's Anbar province last September. Henry won for reporting on the Bush administration's contradicting assertions that top Iranian officials had authorized sending improvised explosive devices to Iraq.

■ Alexis Simendinger of the National Journal, the Aldo Beckman Award for sustained excellence in White House coverage. The judges recognized her for breaking the story about the use of Republican National Committee e-mail accounts by some White House officials.

■ Seattle Post-Intelligencer reporters Paul Shukovsky, Tracy Johnson and Daniel Lathrop, the Edgar A. Poe Award for excellence in coverage of news of national or regional significance. In a series of articles, "The Terrorism Trade-Off," they revealed a major shift by the FBI away from white-collar crimes as it ramped up its pursuit of suspected terrorists.

The White House Correspondents Association was formed in 1914 as a liaison between the press and the president. Every president since Calvin Coolidge has attended the dinner.

## Prince plays Coachella, covers Radiohead

**INDIO, Calif.** (AP)—"Coachella, I am here." Prince hit the stage at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival with that announcement, heralding his arrival as the much-anticipated headliner of the summer festival.

Shortly after 11 p.m. Saturday, Prince strutted onto the stage wearing white pants and a white shirt with glittery fringe. His performance, the centerpiece of the three-day festival, was announced only two weeks ago, immediately making an already very hip festival of 125-plus bands significantly more in-demand.

And Prince knew it.

"You are the coolest place on earth right now!" Prince declared to a sea of tens of thousands.

Prince, who had been sought out to perform at Coachella since the festival was founded nine years ago, told the crowd that when he agreed to perform, he informed the organizers that he would not only play, but party too.

True to his word, Prince then launched his band—complete with a horn section and background singers—into "Jungle Love." Morris Day came out to sing his song, while Prince strolled around the stage with his guitar.

For the beginning of the show, Prince preferred to let his guitar do the talking. He also welcomed the singer and drummer Sheila E., who took the lead for a song and then joined Prince in an extended jam.

Finally, Prince satisfied the crowd with a celebratory performance of "1999." His classic "Little Red Corvette" soon followed.

One of the big surprises of Prince's concert was his cover of Radiohead's "Creep," which was sure to be one of Coachella's most talked-about performances. With some lyrics adjusted, a ripping guitar solo and extended falsetto crooning for a finale, Prince's "Creep" had the crowd slack-jawed.

To close the set, he gave another unique take on a song not his own: the Beatles' "Come Together." He urged the audience—whom he called his "choir"—to sing "Come together, yeah" over and over.

And just as trepidation was beginning to take hold in the crowd that Prince might actually leave without playing "Purple Rain," he returned to confirm that even in the desert, it could rain purple.

Even after the encore, though, he came back for more.

"They're telling me that we got to go, but I can't leave!" Prince shouted. He then flew through a torrid version of "Let's Go Crazy."

Prince had widely been considered the one act most all concertgoers—a diverse 60,000 of indie rockers, electronica dancers and pop fans—were certain to see. And by the end of "Let's Go Crazy," Prince had seemed to put his stamp on Coachella lore.

"From now on, this is Prince's house," he shouted before triumphantly strutting off stage and tossing his guitar 30 feet behind him.

# Kenny Chesney hurts foot at concert

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—Kenny Chesney hurt his foot after it got caught between a rising platform and the stage but still put on his show.

The country singer limped



In this April 14, 2008 file photo singer and actress Miley Cyrus arrives at the 2008 CMT Awards in Nashville, Tenn.

## Miley Cyrus says photo spread embarrasses her

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Miley Cyrus said she's embarrassed by an apparently racy photo spread appearing in the upcoming issue of *Vanity Fair*.

"I took part in a photo shoot that was supposed to be 'artistic' and now, seeing the photographs and reading the story, I feel so embarrassed. I never intended for any of this to happen and I apologize to my fans who I care so deeply about," Cyrus said Sunday in a statement through her publicist.

The photos, by renowned photographer Annie Leibovitz, were taken to accompany an interview with the 15-year-old pop star and her father, singer Billy Ray Cyrus. They include shots of the teen reportedly topless and wrapped in a blanket.

The Disney Channel, which airs Cyrus' TV show "Hannah Montana," was also critical of *Vanity Fair*.

"Unfortunately, as the article suggests, a situation was created to deliberately manipulate a 15-year-old in order to sell magazines," a network statement said.

A phone message left for a *Vanity Fair* representative was not immediately returned Sunday night. But in a statement to the TV show "Entertainment Tonight," *Vanity Fair* defended its position.

"Miley's parents and/or minders were on the set all day," the magazine said. "Since the photo was taken digitally, they saw it on the shoot and everyone thought it was a beautiful and natural portrait of Miley."

Cyrus is one of the biggest—and most G-rated—acts in the country and is often considered a role model for young girls.

Her "Best of Both Worlds" tour sold out arenas, and her successful 3-D concert film collected \$31.3 million in its opening weekend in February.

around and was in obvious pain but still played his two-hour set at Williams-Brice Stadium on Saturday in Columbia before more than 44,000 fans, The State newspaper of Columbia reported.

Chesney's boot had to be cut off his foot after the show, the singer said in a statement that did not detail how serious the injury was.

But he said he never considered stopping the show on his

"Poets & Pirates Tour 2008."

The next show is Thursday in Austin, Texas, and the tour's promoters have not announced whether Chesney's injured foot will affect the performance.

## Carmen Electra, Paris Hilton frolic at Coachella after-party

THERMAL, Calif. (AP)—Carmen Electra showed off her fiance and black diamond engagement ring at an exclusive Coachella after-party, while the Hilton sisters frolicked with their beaus.

Paris Hilton and Benji Madden arrived just before midnight Saturday, greeting DJ Steve Aoki with hugs at an airport hangar transformed into a makeshift nightclub about eight miles from the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival.

While Nicky Hilton and David Katzenberg held court in a corner booth at the invite-only T-Mobile Tone Def After Party, Electra and Rob Peterson wandered with their hands firmly clasped.

Electra announced her engagement to the musician on Thursday.

Paris Hilton and Madden were inseparable throughout the evening as they snapped photos of each other and friends, watched partygoers perform karaoke in the PlayStation 3 "SingStar" Lounge, and scarfed down nachos and hot dogs from food trucks parked inside the event.

During the celebration, attendees were invited to customize T-Mobile devices and Michael Stars T-shirts, receive makeup makeovers from Too Faced Cosmetics, lounge on



Carmen Electra at the T-Mobile Sidekick Tone-Def After Party in Coachella Valley, Calif. on Saturday April 26, 2008.

beds underneath vintage posters, and dance to tunes provided by Aoki, Adam "DJ AM" Goldstein and "That '70s Show" actor Danny "DJ Mom Jeans" Masterson, who all operated from separate booths on the dance floor.

## Sean Penn speaks at Coachella

INDIO, Calif. (AP)—Sean Penn spoke at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival on Sunday, urging the young crowd to involve themselves politically.

The Oscar-winning actor, a late addition to the music festival, jokingly referred to his out-of-place billing among the 125-plus performers.

Wearing a T-shirt and jeans and smoking a cigarette while he sat on a stool, Penn said he unfortunately couldn't perform his "a cappella

Celine Dion cover act" since he had "compromised his upper register."

Instead, Penn urged festival-goers to join him on his "Dirty Hands Caravan," a biodiesel cross-country bus trip he plans to launch Monday, arriving in New Orleans on May 4. The purpose of the trip, which he hopes 300 will join, is to encourage young people to be more politically and environmentally involved.

"The government can't do it," Penn said. "They can't save this thing."

Penn said that while younger generations were smarter and more technologically savvy than any before it, they were separating themselves through technology.

He also criticized the war in Iraq.

"For the 3,000 people we lost on 9/11, we've lost 4,000 in this war, and that's just American soldiers," Penn said.

"And why did we let it happen?" he added. "It's simple: We let it happen."

The "most powerful third party is you and me," Penn said.

Penn, who was to repeat the talk on the main stage later Sunday, was one of the few participants to discuss politics at the Southern California festival, where dancing and music were far more prevalent.



Actor Sean Penn simulates a dance move as he addresses the crowd during the third day of the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in Indio, Calif., Sunday, April 27, 2008.

## Lowbrow gossiping is topic of high interest

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



*Dear Abby*

DEAR ABBY: I live in a medium-sized community where a lot of people know one another. I often hear them discuss such private matters as the state of someone's marriage, their finances, etc. Even if they don't know if what they're saying is true, they still repeat it.

Whenever someone starts talking to me about a person who isn't there, I remind her that she wouldn't appreciate having her business discussed behind her back. One neighbor even asked me about my own marriage in front of a group of people. When I politely asked why she would ask about such an intimate matter, she became angry and told me I was being rude to her. I may have embarrassed her, but not as much as she did me.

I think gossiping is a low form of entertainment at someone else's expense. What do you think?

—MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS IN NEVADA

DEAR MINDING YOUR OWN BUSINESS: Gossip is, indeed, a low form of entertainment—and if we're honest, it's something most of us have indulged in at one time or another. Everybody wants to know other people's business. One need only look at readers with their noses buried in the scandal rags at the supermarket checkout counter for verification.

Why we have this compulsion is anybody's guess. Perhaps it's because gossip requires little intellectual effort, distracts us from concentrating on important tasks in our lives that might be painful or difficult to confront, or makes us feel superior.

P.S. You did not embarrass your neighbor by rebuffing her inappropriate question. She embarrassed herself by asking.

DEAR ABBY: I am a high school senior, currently going through the process of applying to colleges. As I've visited various schools, I have realized that college isn't cheap. Many of them cost more than \$45,000 a year.

My question is, how do I go about paying back my parents for college? They can afford to pay for my education and still be financially solid, yet I know I will have to repay them. How long after I graduate should it be before I begin?

—MATTHEW IN BURR RIDGE, ILL.

DEAR MATTHEW: Discuss this with your parents. The answer may depend on how quickly they will need the money, and what kind of payment schedule you can comfortably handle once you have graduated and become self-supporting.

Please consider that you may be eligible for scholarships and grants that could lessen your—and their—financial obligation. Your school guidance counselor can provide you with this information. Your public library also has information regarding scholarships, so you should consult the librarian.

DEAR ABBY: An elderly relative, whom I love dearly, is dying. She has always been demure and ladylike, and I am concerned that when the time comes for the embalming and viewing, the deceased is never buried in underwear or shoes. Is this true?

—DONNA IN ENID, OKLA.

DEAR DONNA: Put your fears to rest. A person has the right to "dictate" what she (or he) wants to be buried in. If the deceased has left no instruction, the funeral director will take direction from the family.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



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/s/  
Oscar C. Camacho  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

# Diaw's near triple-double helps Suns avoid sweep



**PHOENIX** (AP)—There was no San Antonio sweep, not even close. Boris Diaw had 20 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists in one of the best playoff performances of his career, and the Phoenix Suns stayed alive with a 105-86 rout of the Spurs on Sunday.

Raja Bell scored 21 of his 27 points in a dominant first half to help Phoenix bring a one-sided end to the defending NBA champions' nine-game playoff winning streak. The Suns were 11-0 in the regular season when Bell scored at least 20.

Phoenix still trails the first-round series 3-1, with Game 5 on Tuesday night in San Antonio. No NBA team has come back from 0-3 to win a series.

Steve Nash and Leandro Barbosa scored 15 apiece for the Suns. Shaquille O'Neal had 14 points and 12 rebounds.

Phoenix coach Mike D'Antoni drew two technicals and was ejected with 3:38 to play and his team up 104-80.

Diaw, starting in place of injured Grant Hill, also led the Suns' vastly improved defense, guarding his good friend and fellow Frenchman Tony Parker much of the game.

Parker, who scored a career-high 41 in Game 3 and was averaging 33 in the series, led San Antonio with 18 points and Manu Ginobili scored 10.

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich threw in the towel by benching both of them along with Tim Duncan late in the third quarter.

After watching the Spurs play to near-perfection in a 115-99 victory on Friday, the Suns were the aggressors from the start on Sunday.

Phoenix led by 21 after one quarter, by as many as 24 in the second and by 30 in the third.

Nash's 15-footer gave the Suns a



AP  
San Antonio Spurs' Tony Parker, left, of France, watches Phoenix Suns' Boris Diaw (3), also of France, make a fast break basket in the second quarter of Game 4 of an NBA first round playoff series basketball Sunday, April 27, 2008, in Phoenix.

## Lions trade up, take leading rusher Kevin Smith



**NEW YORK** (AP)—After threatening Barry Sanders' single-season rushing record in college, Kevin Smith now can concentrate—or at least dream about—Sanders' marks with the Detroit Lions.

The Central Florida running back and nation's leading rusher in 2007 was chosen atop the third round of the NFL draft Sunday. The Lions even traded up two spots with Miami for the privilege of beginning the second day by grabbing Smith.

Last season, Smith rushed for 2,567 yards and scored 29 touchdowns. Sanders' set the single-season record with 2,628 in 1988, when he won the Heisman Trophy. He went on to a Hall of Fame career over the next decade with the Lions.

Detroit will settle for a semblance of that from Smith, who left the Conference USA school as a junior after first saying he would return to college.

"I never thought of myself as chasing Barry Sanders. He's a legend," Smith said. "My numbers might have been close, but I was just thrilled to be close to someone like that. Now I get to play in the same organization, which is a dream come true."

And enough to make a guy weep. "The coach told me that they were going to come up to get me, and he put me

on the phone with all the coaches, and I just burst into tears," Smith admitted.

He was one of two All-Americans chosen in the third round. Penn State linebacker Dan Connor went to Carolina 10 spots later.

Connor left Linebacker U as its career tackles leader with 419. In the last few years, the Panthers have lost some starters at the position, notably Will Witherpoon and Dan Morgan. They hit with Jon Beason, their first-rounder last year, at middle linebacker.

"It's going to be great to be able to learn under a bunch of great linebackers and guys that have experience," Connor said. "I'm more looking forward to that, taking it all in and learning from guys who have proven themselves every week on Sundays."

Other third-rounders looking to prove themselves in the NFL will be defensive back Chevis Jackson (Atlanta), running back Jacob Hester (San Diego) and receiver Early Doucet (Arizona), all from national champion LSU. Hester could fill the role of LaDainian Tomlinson's stand-in previously held by Michael Turner, now with the Falcons, and the Cardinals need another wideout after losing Bryant Johnson to San Francisco.

Texas running back Jamaal Charles was chosen by Kansas City and West Virginia RB Steve Slaton was taken

by Houston. The Giants took Michigan's big-play receiver, Mario Manningham, who could be groomed to eventually replace former Wolverine Amani Toomer.

New England chose San Diego State quarterback Kevin O'Connell, causing one pundit to remark: "Is this the end of the Tom Brady era?"

Uh, no.

Another San Diego area QB went late in the fifth round when Josh Johnson of the University of San Diego Toreros was chosen by Tampa Bay, which has as many quarterbacks as some entire divisions.

Southern California quarterback John David Booty was the second selection in the fifth round, by Minnesota after the Vikings made an in-division deal with Green Bay. The Packers already had their QB of the future: Brian Brohm, chosen in the second round on Saturday, yet chose Matt Flynn of LSU in the seventh.

Tennessee passer Erik Ainge went to the Jets at No. 162 overall, six spots after Oregon's Dennis Dixon was taken by Pittsburgh. The Steelers are hoping the fast, versatile Dixon can recover from a severe knee injury to make their team.

Utah State guard Shawn Murphy, son of former baseball star Dale Murphy, went in the fourth round to Miami.

The Bengals grabbed Kansas tackle

79-49 lead with 5:50 left in the third quarter. With Parker and Duncan on the bench, San Antonio cut it to 22 late in the quarter, but it was 93-65 entering the fourth.

Bell shot 6-of-7, 3-for-4 on 3-pointers to lead Phoenix to a 65-43 halftime lead. Diaw scored 10 points in the half.

The Suns never led in Game 3, but built big advantages early in the first two games, only to lose at the end. Their first-quarter start Sunday was their best yet.

Diaw's shot over Ginobili inside made it 11-1, and it was 20-9 after Barbosa's driving layup with 5:41 left in the first. It was 34-13 after one.

San Antonio was 4-for-19 shooting with six turnovers in the first two quarters.

The Spurs cut it to 12 three times in the second quarter, the last at 49-37 on Ginobili's 15-foot bank shot with 4:55 to go. Phoenix, though, scored the next 12—six on free throws by Bell—to go up 61-37 on Diaw's layup with 1:33 left in the half.

### Hornets 97, Mavericks 84

At Dallas, David West let out his pent-up frustration over a poor Game 3 with a determined effort in Game 4, scoring 10 of his 24 points in a quick stretch early in the second half to help New Orleans pull away and take a 3-1 lead in the first-round series over Dallas.

The Hornets hadn't won in Dallas over 14 tries since January 1998. This victory means they might not have to come back until next season. They can eliminate the Mavericks by winning Game 5 on Tuesday night in New Orleans.

Dirk Nowitzki had 22 points and 13 rebounds and Jason Terry scored 20 points, but they didn't get much help. Josh Howard was 3-for-16 and Jason Kidd had only three points, three assists and four rebounds before getting

ejected with 7:16 left for a flagrant foul on Jannero Pargo. Thousands of fans bailed out soon after, then a guy down the row from team owner Mark Cuban got tossed, too.

### Cavaliers 100, Wizards 97

In Washington, LeBron James had 34 points and 12 rebounds, and passed to Delonte West for a tiebreaking 3-pointer with 5.4 seconds left Sunday, helping Cleveland beat Washington to take a 3-1 lead in their Eastern Conference series.

Cleveland led by 15 in the third quarter, but Gilbert Arenas led Washington's rally.

He made two free throws with 57 seconds left to get Washington within two points, and after James missed a jumper, Arenas' 8-foot fadeaway with 28 seconds remaining tied the game 97-97. James dribbled out the clock before finding West, whose career playoff-high 21 points included five of Cleveland's 13 3-pointers. The series moves to Cleveland on Wednesday for Game 5 in the best-of-7 series.

### Pistons 93, 76ers 84

At Philadelphia, Tayshaun Prince scored 23 points and made all but one shot from the field, and Detroit played with a purpose and dominated the second half to even the best-of-seven Eastern Conference playoff series at 2-2.

The Pistons erased a 14-point, first-half deficit against the upstart 76ers and will host Game 5 on Tuesday night.

Rasheed Wallace finished with 20 points and 10 rebounds, and Richard Hamilton bounced back from a 1-for-10 first half to finish with 18 points. Chauncey Billups also scored 18 points.

Andre Iguodala missed 10 of his final 11 shots and scored 12 points. Samuel Dalembert had 12 points and 12 rebounds for the Sixers, while Andre Miller and Willie Green each scored 13 points.

## Lions trade up, take leading rusher Kevin Smith

despite what some called attitude problems. Sims was chosen by Cincinnati, which gambled even more in the fifth when it took defensive tackle Jason Rucker, also an All-American.

Chicago took LSU safety Craig Steltz in the fourth round. Yep, Steltz was an All-American, too.

Cleveland finally got involved after sitting out the first day with no picks. The Browns took UNLV linebacker Beau Bell 104th overall, and soon after went for Rucker.

Safety Dominique Barber of Minnesota, younger brother of Dallas RB Marion Barber, went to Houston in the sixth round. Hawaii's record-setting quarterback, Colt Brennan, landed in Washington in that round.

Michigan star runner Mike Hart slipped all the way to 202nd overall, to Indianapolis.

"I never questioned myself," he said. "There's nothing you can do because it's out of my hands at that point. I was just hoping I got picked up somewhere and go and try to prove myself again."

Two of the third-rounders, DTs Marcus Harrison of Arkansas and Pat Sims of Auburn, bring some baggage to the NFL.

Harrison was suspended at Arkansas

last summer on drug charges, then returned to the team. Chicago picked him.

Sims once quit the Auburn team, but

returned to eventually become a starter

in all, the two days and seven rounds—the first two rounds featured shortened time frames for picks—took 14 hours, 26 minutes. David Vobora, a defensive back/linebacker from Idaho was the final selection.

# Scott blows lead before winning Byron Nelson



**IRVING, Texas**  
(AP)—Adam Scott felt he needed to make a statement by winning Sunday. He did, though, not quite the way he wanted to do it.

After blowing the three-stroke lead he carried into the final round, Scott made a 9-foot birdie putt on No. 18 to force a playoff, then made a 48-footer playing it again on the third playoff hole to beat Ryan Moore in the EDS Byron Nelson Championship.

"In the end, I think (the statement) was to myself, I could actually win it when things weren't going my way," Scott said. "But it wasn't quite the statement I had in mind. I would have liked to have gone out there and have played like Ryan played and won by a few."

Still, Scott made the clutch shots when he needed them for his sixth PGA Tour victory after cutting short his post-Masters trip home to Australia so not to waste his good play there.

Playing the 18th hole for the third time in less than an hour, the second time in the playoff, Scott hit his tee shot into a fairway bunker to the right. But he got his approach to the front of the green, then rolled the putt over two ridges and into the cup.

"I got away with one today," said Scott, at No. 10 in the world the highest-ranked player in the Nelson field. "A bit lucky."

Moore still had a chance to force another hole, but his pin-high putt from the fringe skimmed just past the cup.

"I'm just a little frustrated I didn't make mine," said Moore, who closed with a 2-under 68 to match Scott (71) at 7-under 273.

The playoff was a fitting end after a back-and-forth Sunday duel between Scott and Moore, who finished four shots ahead of Bart Bryant (72). Nicholas Thompson (67), Mark Hensby (69) and Carl Pettersson (69) tied for fourth at 2 under.

It was the fourth career runner-up finish for Moore, the first player since Tiger Woods to skip Q-school and go straight from college to the PGA Tour. Woods got his first victory in his seventh start as a pro, while Moore is still looking for his first after 70 tournaments since 2005, after he was a four-time All-American at UNLV.

"A loss is a loss, but I tied for first at the end of the day," said Moore, who had never been in a playoff. "I was just proud of myself for battling around on a tough day in tough conditions."

Playing conditions at the redesigned TPC Four Seasons changed drastically again after rain overnight combined with

blustery conditions Sunday. It was an unseasonable cool day with temperatures barely reaching 60 degrees, with wind

gusting to 30 mph making it feel cooler—and

making club selection harder.

The winning score was the highest since the Nelson moved to the Las Colinas venue in 1983. Only three other times had a winner failed to finish at least 10-under par, and two of those were in rain-shortened tournaments.

The playoff started with both players making pars, first at No. 18 and then at the TPC Four Seasons' signature par 3, the 198-yard 17th hole, where Moore had taken a one-stroke lead in regulation by curling in a 12-foot birdie putt.

Scott, who earned \$1,152,000, missed opportunities to win on each of the first two playoff holes, leaving makable birdie putts short both times.

Moore's tee shot to start the playoff went way right into the gallery, but he made a great save to the green and was able to two-putt for par.

When they were back to 17, Scott went for the flag tucked in the right front of the green beyond the

Bradley hit a three-run homer for Texas.

Padilla (3-2) struck out two, walked two and didn't allow a runner past second in his first shutout with the Rangers.

**Blue Jays 5, Royals 2**  
In Kansas City, Missouri, Scott Rolen homered and drove in two runs, Alex Rios collected four hits and scored three times and Toronto ended a six-game losing streak.

Rios, who raised his average to .330, scored the go-ahead run in the fifth from first base on Rolen's single to left. Rios was waved home when left fielder Jose Guillen threw to second base instead of hitting the cutoff man.

**White Sox 6, Orioles 1**  
In Chicago, Paul Konerko homered twice and Jose Contreras pitched 6 2-3 innings to lead the White Sox to the win.

Hitting just .197 with three homers coming in, Konerko connected off Jeremy Guthrie (0-3) leading off the second and sixth innings.

**Diamondbacks 2, Padres 1**  
In San Diego, Brandon Webb

outpitched Jake Peavy in a battle of the last two NL Cy Young Award winners, leading the Arizona Diamondbacks to victory over the San Diego Padres.

Webb (6-0), the 2006 Cy Young winner, allowed just one unearned run and twice escaped bases-loaded jams before leaving after six innings. He became the first six-game winner in Major League Baseball and lowered his ERA to 1.98.

**Dodgers 3, Rockies 2, 10 innings**  
In Los Angeles, James Loney singled home the winning run in the 10th inning, and the Dodgers completed a three-game sweep.

It's the first three-game winning streak of the season for Los Angeles under new manager Joe Torre, who used his 24th different lineup in 25 games.

**Mets 6, Braves 3**  
In New York, Carlos Delgado turned boos into a standing ovation with his first two-homer game in almost a year, leading the Mets to the win.

New York knocked out John Smoltz after four innings in his

making club selection harder.

lake, and landed the ball about 10 feet from the cup. Moore was well left off the fringe, near the same area where Scott was in regulation, but both two-putted, sending them to 18 again.

Moore played for only the third time in 10 weeks, having taken some extra time off this spring instead of continuing to play through the pain of a sore shoulder and surgically repaired left hand still bothering him two years later. He opened with a 67 for a share of the lead.

"After this week, I'm looking forward to the rest of the season," Moore said.

It was the 16th playoff at the Nelson since 1968, more than any other tournament on the PGA Tour. The last was in 2004, when Sergio Garcia beat Robert Damron and Dudley Hart on the first extra hole.

At the start of the day, Scott stuffed both hands in his pockets walking down the No. 1 fairway after pushing his opening tee shot way right into trampled grass, but he managed to salvage a bogey after a nice approach short of the green. He was steady until he got to the 174-yard fifth hole, where he hit his tee shot fat and into the water. That double bogey shrunk his lead over Moore from three shots to one.

After Scott and Moore both birdied the par-5 seventh, Moore got even at 6 under with a 6-foot birdie putt on the 461-yard eighth.

Moore went ahead with a 7-foot birdie at the 10th hole, and maintained that lead until consecutive bogeys. His tee shot at the 180-yard 13th went into a greenside bunker and he couldn't make the 10-foot par putt, then his approach at No. 14 went into another bunker behind the green that put Scott up by one.

But Scott, who had a 7-foot birdie attempt at No. 11 stop one roll short of dropping into the cup, hit his first two shots at No. 15 into the rough and wound up with bogey.

"I will probably take away more from gutting it out than winning by five," Scott said. "I needed to go and close this thing out, and it was tough. ... It would have been a tough defeat."

**AP**  
Adam Scott, of Australia, holds up the Byron Nelson Championship golf trophy after winning the tournament in Irving, Texas, Sunday, April 27, 2008.

## Wang ends Yankees three-game slide, nips Indians



**CLEVELAND**  
(AP)—Chien-

Ming Wang shut down Cleveland for seven innings and out-pitched C.C. Sabathia, whose lone mistake turned into a homer by Melky Cabrera, to help the New York Yankees end a three-game slide with a 1-0 win over the Indians on Sunday.

Wang (5-0) allowed four hits, struck out a season-high nine and joined Arizona's Brandon Webb as the majors' only five-game winners.

### Angels 6, Tigers 2

At Detroit, Torii Hunter hit an RBI triple in the fourth inning and added a two-run double in a four-run sixth to help chase Justin Verlander, lifting Los Angeles over Detroit.

Erick Aybar also drove in three runs, helping Anaheim win the three-game series.

### Rays 3, Red Sox 0

In St. Petersburg, Florida, James Shields threw a two-hitter for his first career shutout, Evan Longoria homered off Josh Beckett and Tampa Bay

completed its first three-game sweep of the Red Sox.

Tampa Bay has won six straight for its longest winning streak since a six-game run July 28-Aug. 3, 2005. The Rays (14-11) are three games over .500 for the first time since starting the season 3-0 in 2002. It's also the latest in the season the Rays have ever been three games above .500.

### Athletics 4, Mariners 2

In Seattle, Emil Brown had a broken-bat, two-run single in Oakland's four-run eighth inning.

Seattle starter Felix Hernandez cruised through seven innings, giving up just four hits and striking out 10. Hernandez (2-1) walked Jack Hannahan on a 3-2 pitch to open the inning as the Safeco Field roof slowly closed with a light rain falling.

Mark Ellis then doubled and Daric Barton walked on a 3-2 pitch to load the bases, and Brown dumped a single into left that ended Hernandez's day.

### Rangers 10, Twins 0

In Arlington, Texas, Vicente Padilla threw a seven-hitter for his third career shutout and Milton

Bradley hit a three-run homer for Texas.

Padilla (3-2) struck out two, walked two and didn't allow a runner past second in his first shutout with the Rangers.

### Blue Jays 5, Royals 2

In Kansas City, Missouri, Scott Rolen homered and drove in two runs, Alex Rios collected four hits and scored three times and Toronto ended a six-game losing streak.

Rios, who raised his average to .330, scored the go-ahead run in the fifth from first base on Rolen's single to left. Rios was waved home when left fielder Jose Guillen threw to second base instead of hitting the cutoff man.

### White Sox 6, Orioles 1

In Chicago, Paul Konerko homered twice and Jose Contreras pitched 6 2-3 innings to lead the White Sox to the win.

Hitting just .197 with three homers coming in, Konerko connected off Jeremy Guthrie (0-3) leading off the second and sixth innings.

### Diamondbacks 2, Padres 1

In San Diego, Brandon Webb

outpitched Jake Peavy in a battle of the last two NL Cy Young Award winners, leading the Arizona Diamondbacks to victory over the San Diego Padres.

Webb (6-0), the 2006 Cy Young winner, allowed just one unearned run and twice escaped bases-loaded jams before leaving after six innings. He became the first six-game winner in Major League Baseball and lowered his ERA to 1.98.

### Dodgers 3, Rockies 2, 10 innings

In Los Angeles, James Loney singled home the winning run in the 10th inning, and the Dodgers completed a three-game sweep.

It's the first three-game winning streak of the season for Los Angeles under new manager Joe Torre, who used his 24th different lineup in 25 games.

### Mets 6, Braves 3

In New York, Carlos Delgado turned boos into a standing ovation with his first two-homer game in almost a year, leading the Mets to the win.

New York knocked out John Smoltz after four innings in his

making club selection harder.

first shaky outing of the season and got a three-hit game from backup catcher Raul Casanova.

### Pirates 5, Phillies 1

In Pittsburgh, Paul Maholm tossed a two-hitter, Nate McLouth hit two home runs and Pittsburgh avoided a three-game sweep.

Maholm (2-2) walked four and struck out two in his third career complete game. He improved to 2-0 in three starts at PNC Park this season and has allowed just two runs in 20 1-3 innings at home.

### Cardinals 5, Astros 1

In St. Louis, Troy Glaus hit his first home run with St. Louis and Albert Pujols also went deep.

Glaus, who was acquired in an offseason trade that sent Scott Rolen to Toronto, entered the game leading MLB with the most RBIs without a home run. Glaus went 87 at-bats before hitting a 1-1 offering from Brandon Backe (1-3) to center field for his 16th and 17th RBIs to cap a four-run fifth inning.

### Reds 10, Giants 1

In San Francisco, Edinson Volquez struck out a career-high 10 in seven innings, Brandon Phillips homered twice and Cincinnati roughed up Barry Zito.

Volquez (4-0) allowed one

through in just his fourth start of the year, leading off the 10th inning with a home run to lift Florida to the win.

Helms hit an 0-2 pitch off Seth McClung (1-1) about five feet over the left-field wall for his first home run since last Aug. 10.

### Nationals 2, Cubs 0

In Washington, John Lannan pitched four-hit ball for seven innings and Wily Mo Pena and Wil Nieves had back-to-back RBI singles in the second inning for the Nationals.

Lannan (2-2) struck out three, walked four and didn't allow a hit until Ronny Cedeno singled to start the fifth. He matched a career high with his seven innings.

### Reds 10, Giants 1

In San Francisco, Edinson Volquez struck out a career-high 10 in seven innings, Brandon Phillips homered twice and Cincinnati roughed up Barry Zito.

Volquez (4-0) allowed one run and five hits to win his third consecutive start, and Ryan Freel's two-run single keyed a six-run first inning for Cincinnati. The Reds won consecutive games for the first time in more than two weeks.

# BASA meeting today for coming season



Organizers of the 2008 season of the Belau Amateur Softball Association men's and women's slow-pitch leagues will hold a meeting today at

6pm at Minatchom Attdao pavilion across from the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Managers and coaches of teams participating in the upcoming league are asked to attend today's meeting since

details of the season will be discussed.

BASA board member Brian Adelbai said they will be limiting the number of teams to 10 for men and six for women so they could have eight games

played every Sunday.

Adelbai is reminding interested team managers and coaches to start preparing for their 2008 season, which is set to open tentatively in May.

The opening date is not

## Local players to take part in Tinian fiesta tennis



The 2008 San Jose Fiesta Tennis Tournament that kicks off this week on Tinian will see familiar faces from the island's racquet scene.

According to Tinian Ten-

nis Association president and tourney director Sonny Decena local players that will take part include himself, son Benjie, and wife Linda, Doy Ligan, Archie Monticello, Conrad Libot, Emily Kwan, Ellen Uy, Sue Reyes, Rolly and Emry Bugarin, Elvis

De Castro, Joseph San Nicolas, Jonathan San Nicolas, James San Nicolas, Gregor Barit, Herman and Julian Hofsneider, Arley Long, Xuan, Bogs Pascua, Edgar Acculador, Manny Sencio, and Victor Cunanan.

Competitions will be held

in the men's and women's singles and men's, women's, and mixed doubles in the open, 4.0, 3.0, and 2.0 levels at the Tinian Youth Center Tennis Court. It will start from May 1 and conclude in May 3 during the San Jose Fiesta. (*Mark Rabago*)

## CNMI

*From Page 28*

MI's first goal to knot the count at 1-1 when he scored four minutes after Manibusan's goal.

The half ended with the score tied at 1-1.

Guam moved ahead in the 52nd minute on an own goal and seemed headed for victory if not for an 80th minute strike by Steven Clark McKagan when he beat the defense of Maluvelmeng and defender Micah Francisco Paulino.

McKagan's goal brought cheers to the CNMI faithful and football fans that included Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez,

Washington Representative Pete A. Tenorio, Northern Mariana Islands Football Association president Jerry Tan, Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association president Michael A. White, Guam Football Association president Richard K. Lai, East Asian Football Federation secretary general Takeo Oda, EAFF deputy secretary general Alexandre Rego, and EAFF technical officer Ichiro Fujita.

But the CNMI gallery went silent once Cruz's overtime goal went inside the net as Guam celebrated with the win.

Playing in front of the hometown crowd pumped up Team CNMI as they played aggressively all throughout and contested

Guam for every ball possession. The loss was the third straight for CNMI against Guam as their southern neighbors swept them in last year's preliminary round match in the East Asian Football Championships.

The loss was an improvement on the CNMI's shocking 0-9 shutout loss to Guam in Game 2 in Guam on April 1, 2007. They were beaten by Guam, 3-2, in the first game on Saipan on March 25, 2007.

Aside from Borja, Miller, and McKagan, other team CNMI members are Norman Ray Iglesias Camacho, Yong Woon Choi, captain David Cabrera Duenas, Peter Charles Houk, Lucas Paul Knecht, Christopher Duenas

Leon Guerrero, Peter Benjamin Loken, Elias Jerome Malite Rangamar, Alfred Dale Roberts, Brad Edward Ruszala, Nicolas Benjamin Swaim, Michael Jon Thomas, Angelo O'Connor Villagomez, Daniel Jason Westphal, and Ross Benjamin Wood.

Joining Cruz, Maluvelmeng, Manibusan, and Paulino for Team Guam are captain Dominic Tacadina Gadia, Aaron Ramon Jackson, Mark Anthony Torres, Scott Dominic Leon, Ian Anthony Lujan Mariano, Jude Brendan Bischoff, Andre Tacadina Gadia, Joseph Patrick Aurelio Laanan, James Lee Bush, Francisco Bordallo Santos, Matthew Presto Cruz, Anthony Joseph Manibusan, and Thomas Kristopher Pangelinean Medler.

## OL'ACES

*From Page 28*

Cruz and Pelisamen waxed hot early in the game as Ol'Aces opened up with a 36-19 lead after the first quarter then coasted to their fourth straight win.

The 68 made by Ol'Aces was probably the most points scored in a half in CNMI basketball history and the 139 they scored was the most by any team this season.

Ol'Aces scored a total of 483 points in its first four games or an

average of 120.8 points per game while holding down their opponents to 87.3 per outing mowing down their opponents by an average winning margin of 33.5.

Ol'Aces held the Starwater Kings to a season-low 54 points, while the 103 by MIGS was the most scored by any team against the Sonny Flores-mentored squad.

Speedy Luis Iguel, Elias Rangamar, and Taj Van Buren had 14 apiece, while Marvin Rabauliman, who is Cruz's teammate in the CNMI Junior

National team, finished with 12. Abong Camacho had four points to round up Ol'Aces' scoring.

Raymond Cadagat remains the most consistent scorer for MIGS ending up with 37 points but could not help his team end its losing skid and slumped to its fourth straight loss.

John Jugos and Gilbert Cabaddu added 18 and 17 each, while Ronald Delos Reyes, after erupting for 40 points in MIGS' 125-106 loss against Shirley's on April 23, was held to 11 markers.

In the second game, the Price Costco Storemasters won by default against the Water Kings.

**Ol'Aces 139 – Cruz 43, Pelisamen 38, Iguel 14, Rangamar 14, Van Buren 14, Rabauliman 12, Camacho 4.**

**MIGS 103 – Cadagat 37, Jugos 18, Cabaddu 17, Delos Reyes 11, Banatasa 8, Lumauag 6, Doronilla 4, Delarma 2.**

**Scoring by quarters:** 36-19, 68-39, 101-77, 139-103.

**Referees:** Eric Artillaga and Dado Vistal.

## FALCONS

*From Page 28*

Sablan gave up six hits with three strikeouts and no walks for the Hustlers.

Mart Pangelinean only went 1-for-3 but had a two-RBI triple in the Hustlers' six-run first inning. Joel Satur went 3-for-4 with two runs, a double, and a triple.

## Aztecs 3, Dolphins 1

Aztecs pitchers Okeril Techur and Nick San Nicolas combined

for 12 strikeouts to help their team escape with a 3-1 win over the Dolphins on Thursday.

Techur pitched five no-hit innings in the start with seven strikeouts and two walks, while San Nicolas needed 28 pitches in pitching two-innings in relief giving up one hit fanning five with no walks.

Lawrence Sablan, who walked, scored the Dolphins' lone run when he touched home plate on an error by Aztecs catcher Jona-than Pangelinean in the fourth.

Derrick Nedlic doubled off San Nicolas in the seventh for

the Dolphins' lone hit. Elton Santos earned the loss pitching six innings allowing six hits with 10 strikeouts and four walks. All of the Aztecs' runs were unearned.

## JUNIOR LEAGUE

### Jets 33, Fielders 5

The Juan S. Tenorio-Pacific Amusement Jets combined for 29-for-45 in batting and used a 12-run third inning scoring blitz to waltz to a 33-5 triumph over the Fielders.

Anthony Salas and McGarett Duenas combined for 10-for-12 at the plate.

Salas scored four times had a double and a triple to go with his a season-high seven RBIs. He had a bases-clearing triple in the third and a three-RBI double in the fifth. Due-nas scored five runs had three doubles and four RBIs.

Harry Nakamura went 4-for-6 with four runs, a double, a triple, and four RBIs, while Justin Kin-tol went 2-for-3 with two runs and an RBI.

The Jets bullpen gave up three hits with six strikeouts and six walks with all of the Fielders' runs earned.

## DEMAPAN

*From Page 28*

lows: Andy Nepiai (72); Ed "Doi" Tenorio (73); Ben Duenas (74); Asterio Tawanpiy (76); Joe Wabol (79); Jess Wabol (79); Will Maui (81); junior golfer Jay Choi (86); and Gus Camacho (86).

Since the monthly qualifier was held during the NMC Foun-

dation Open, no close to the pin competitions were held. RGA also welcomed a new member in the person of Ulyses Kete-bengang this April.

The RGA Ace of the Month for May will be held on May 10 at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort west course. Tee time is at 12pm with check in 30 minutes prior at 11:30am.

In related news, RGA remind-

ed the public that that the club has halved its membership dues for 2008 from the long-standing fee of \$50 to only \$25.

This happened after RGA recognized the hard economic times and decided to give its members and future members a break by slashing the cost of becoming part of RGA.

The club hopes that by making membership in RGA a lit-

tle lighter in the pocket, more weekend warriors will now return to the golf links and renew their membership or apply as new members of the golf club.

For more information about RGA's new membership policies and other competitions held by the club, contact president Adam Hardwicke at 483-2926 or tournament director Jess Wabol at 233-3673.

yet settled and will be one of the issues to be discussed in the meeting.

BASA recently crowned Salty Boyz as its Masters league champion when they defeated

PTI 83, 2-1, in the three-game finals series.

For more information, call Adelbai at 234-8438 or Ace Yoshida at 236-2549 and 483-2546. (*Jon Perez*)

## TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

### MLB STANDINGS

#### AMERICAN LEAGUE East Division

W	L	Pct	GB
14	11	.560	—
14	11	.560	—
15	12	.556	—
13	13	.500	1 1/2
11	15	.423	3 1/2

#### Central Division

Chicago	14	10	.583	—
Cleveland	12	13	.480	2 1/2
Kansas City	11	14	.440	3 1/2
Minnesota	11	14	.440	3 1/2
Detroit	11	15	.423	4

#### West Division

Los Angeles	16	10	.615	—
Oakland	16	10	.615	—
Seattle	12	14	.462	4
Texas	9	17	.346	7

#### NATIONAL LEAGUE

##### East Division

Florida	15	10	.600	—
New York	13	11	.542	1 1/2
Philadelphia	14	12	.538	1 1/2
Atlanta	12	13	.480	3
Washington	9	17	.346	6 1/2

##### Central Division

Chicago	16	9	.640	—
St. Louis	16	10	.615	1/2
Milwaukee	14	11	.560	2
Houston	12	14	.462	4 1/2

# 2nd Annual Marianas Cup

Photos by  
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Top left, the CNMI and Guam men's national teams pose for a group photo after their game.

Top, CNMI fans run around the track with the CNMI flag as a show of support for the men's national team.

Far left, Guam's Ian Anthony Lujan Mariano, right, and Peter Benjamin Loken of the CNMI chase the ball.

Left, fans anxiously wait for the start of the men's game between the CNMI and Guam.



The CNMI's Alfred Dale Roberts, right, and Guam's Jude Brendan Bischoff keep their eye on the ball in their game on Sunday in the 2nd Marianas Cup at the Civic Center Field inside the Susupe Sports Complex.



The CNMI's Ross Benjamin Wood, left, watches teammates Norman Ray Iglesias Camacho and Nicolas Benjamin Swaim celebrate Steven Clark McKagan's goal.



Nicolas Benjamin Swaim of the CNMI battles Guam's Micah Francisco Paulino for ball possession.



Guam captain Dominic Tacadina Gadia, left, and Matthew Presto Cruz raise the Marianas Cup.



Right, Steven Clark McKagan, center, scores a goal against the defense of Guam goalkeeper Brett Simon Maluwelmeng, right, and Micah Francisco Paulino.

Farright, kids under the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association's youth program hold the FIFA flag prior to the start of the match between the CNMI and Guam.





**Scott blows lead before winning Byron Nelson in playoff**

Adam Scott felt he needed to make a statement by winning Sunday. He did, though, not quite the way he wanted to do it.

25

Saipan Tribune

# Sports

28 TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 2008

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

**Diaw's near triple-double helps Suns avoid sweep**

There was no San Antonio sweep, not even close. Boris Diaw had 20 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists in one of the best playoff performances of his career, and the Phoenix Suns stayed alive with a 105-86 rout of the Spurs on Sunday.

24



# CNMI men go down fighting vs Guam



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

From left, the CNMI's Ross Benjamin Wood, captain David Cabrera Duenas, and Peter Benjamin Loken gang up on Guam's David Christopher Manibusan in their game on Sunday in the 2nd Annual Marianas Cup at the Civic Center Field inside the Susupe Sports Complex.

By JON PEREZ  
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REPORTER

**M**atthew Albert Cepeda Cruz played the spoiler's role against the home team as his goal in over-

time helped Guam escape with a 3-2 win over CNMI in Sunday's Marianas Cup at the Oleai Field inside the Oleai Sports Complex. Team CNMI was hoping to win its first game against their



southern neighbors or come up with a draw but Cruz quashed their hopes when he beat the defense of keeper Gregory Pat Borja in the fifth minute of the first overtime.

The Guam defense then held up against the CNMI's continuous attempts to score with keeper Brett Simon Maluwel-meng getting plenty of help from their defenders.

There was no golden goal awarded in the game and they



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Guam's Matthew Albert Cepeda Cruz, left, makes a header as Christopher Duenas Leon Guerrero of the CNMI looks on in their game on Sunday in the 2nd Annual Marianas Cup at the Civic Center Field inside the Susupe Sports Complex.

played two seven minute and 30-second overtime periods aside from 90 minutes in regulation.

Guam struck early in the match when David Manibusan scored in the 20th minute.

Joe Wang Miller gave the CNMI a

See CNMI on Page 26

## Demapan sets score to beat for May

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSISTANT EDITOR



Joe Demapan has one hand wrapped around the championship for May after topping the Refaluwasch Golf Association monthly qualifier last Saturday held in conjunction with the 6th Annual NMC Foundation Open.

The former Department of Public Works secretary shot a net score of 65 to beat 11 other RGA members that took part in the yearly charity event for the islands' lone tertiary institution.

Demapan fired his 65 on the strength of his 78 gross following a 37 in the front nine and a 41 in the back.

Five strokes behind him was another Joe, Joe Saures, whose net 70 (90 gross, 50-40) was just one stroke better than the net 71 recorded by Tar Olopai (83, 41-42).

The score of the other nine RGA golfers that took part in the competition, with their net scores in parenthesis, are as fol-

See DEMAPAN on Page 26

## Ol'Aces show offensive might

By JON PEREZ  
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REPORTER

**O**l'Aces showed its offensive fire-power Friday night dealing MIGS a 139-103 thrashing in the open division in the Inaugural FMI Inter-Color Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Ol'Aces only used seven players the entire game but all of them scored with the youthful Jericho Cruz scattering a season-high 43 points, while former CNMI Men's National Team member Fred Pelisamen adding 38 more.

Cruz and Pelisamen toyed with the MIGS defense scoring almost at will from everywhere inside the court.

Ol'Aces' scoring pair even outscored the entire MIGS five at halftime as they combined for 42 points at the half against the 39 of their opponents.

See OL'ACES on Page 26



JON PEREZ  
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REPORTER

Jericho Cruz, seen here in a file photo when the CNMI Junior Nationals played against the Southern Sonics, scored a season-high 43 points in Ol'Aces convincing win against MIGS in the FMI Inter-Color Basketball League on Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

## Falcons claw Aztecs in Big League, 6-2

By JON PEREZ  
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REPORTER

The Sablan Topline Falcons of Tanapag used a four-run second inning rally to score a 6-2 win over the UMDA Aztecs in Big League action in the Saipan Little League last Sunday at the Francisco M. Palacio Baseball Field.

Ben Cabrera pitched seven no-relief innings and was tagged with eight hits, while striking out two batters and walking one. The Aztecs' two runs were both earned.

Cabrera even pitched five shutout innings from the second to sixth, getting plenty of help from the Tanapag defense as he forced the Aztecs to hit fly balls, line drives, and grounders that were fielded cleanly by his teammates.



LITTLE LEAGUE  
TANAPAG

BALL

WORLD

CLASS

LEAGUE

WORLD

CLASS

WORLD